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THE EXPOSITOR.

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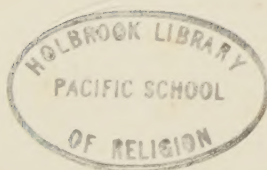
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THE EXPOSITOR.

SCIENCE AND THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF PRAYER.

“WHEN I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ; what is man, that thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man, that thou visitest him ?” Such is the earliest expression of a scientific difficulty felt by the heart of man in the act of worship, the first sense of incompatibility between the claims of the human soul and the magnitude of the physical universe. It is, indeed, rather the prophecy, than the expression, of a difficulty. The Jewish Psalmist has only awakened to a sense of Divine condescension ; he does not doubt the dignity of the human soul ; he merely wonders that it should be so dignified. In so wondering, the Psalmist was scientifically in advance of his age, scientifically in advance of all the ages which the Jewish nation ever reached. The conception of the physical universe held by the people of Israel was highly unfavourable to the nurture of scientific difficulties, eminently conducive to the fostering of human complacency. The earth was an open plain in the centre of the universe, and all ends of the universe were designed to be its ministers. The sun had no other task than to light it by day, the stars no other mission than to illuminate

it by night. Man, as the inhabitant of the earth, was the central figure of Creation; for him all things existed, through him all things were sustained, towards him all things tended: Nature was only his minister. The conception of the universe which proved so favourable to the theocratic spirit of the Jewish nation was transmitted, in course of time, to the life of mediæval Europe—to exert a similar influence, and to effect the same result. If the life of the mediæval priesthood is intellectually less calm than the life of the Jewish theocracy, there is equally in the one as in the other an absence of scientific difficulty. Whatever speculations may have troubled the heart of the Schoolmen, whatever doubts they may have entertained, whatever problems they may have debated, there was one thought which never suggested itself to their minds—the insignificance of man in the midst of the created universe. Some of them were impressed with the insignificance of the individual, but all were convinced of the dignity of the race: humanity was still the centre of the universe, and the destinies of humanity were still the ground of universal existence.

The Reformation came, and carried in its bosom the seeds of a great change. That change, indeed, was less directly connected with the Reformation than is commonly supposed. We must remember that the religious movement of the sixteenth century had both a positive and a negative side: in the former aspect, it was simply the substitution of one creed for another; in the latter, it was the revolt from all past beliefs, without any attempt at substitution. If, in its positive aspect, the Reformation is most interesting to the religious mind, it is as a negative movement that the

secularist chiefly prizes it. There can, we think, be no doubt that its most widely diffused results have not been religious. In breaking with the past, it forced the human mind to begin anew its ascent of the path of knowledge, to divest itself of all previous beliefs in every sphere, to distrust even the methods of reasoning by which those beliefs had been attained. In no department was the revolution more complete than in the world of Science, and in no revolution were the preconceived opinions of humanity so completely overturned. It is not too much to say that the change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system of the heavens proved a more immediate and direct transformation of human ideas than the transition from the religious creed of the Romanist to the personal faith of the Protestant. It is not denied that the Reformation was followed by an age of religious scepticism, and of that scepticism the Reformation has often been made to bear the reproach. Yet, to our mind, nothing is more clear than is the fact, that the religious anarchy of the post-Reformation age had its root, not in a new order of faith, but in a new order of science. That stream of Deistic tendency which arose with the spiritualism of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and culminated in the sensualism of Mandeville, was in no sense the result of Protestant individualism. It took its rise in a new apprehension of Nature, in a conception of the material universe in which the individual mind almost lost its Protestantism in the overpowering sense of its nothingness. Man had ceased to be the centre of Creation. The fond dream of the Jew and the Mediævalist had faded in the light of a new heaven and a new earth. That world, which men had believed

to be the most prominent object in the fields of immensity, receded into the far distance, and dwindled into the smallest of dimensions. That humanity, which, to the eye of Mediævalism, had appeared the centre of universal observation, crept back in dismay from the vision of its own decrepitude, and found itself to be only one amongst the myriad manifestations of life, almost the most inconsiderable of the infinite circles of Creation.

The sudden advent of such a thought could not fail, in the first instance, to produce religious paralysis, and that religious paralysis expressed itself in the form of Deism. It was, indeed, its fittest form. Deism is essentially the separation between the human and the Divine. It is not the denial of a God; it is not the denial of a future; it is not professedly the denial of anything: it is simply the conviction that God, and futurity, and all that relates to man's spiritual existence, have been removed from human knowledge and forbidden to human thought. Deism, in its deepest sense, is the destruction of Jacob's ladder; the divorce of heaven and earth; the denial of a possible communion between the soul and its Creator. It is here, for the first time, that Religion becomes impossible, because it is here, for the first time, that Prayer, which is the soul of Religion, becomes an impossible act. The votaries of a Pagan mythology may consistently ask for the gratification of individual wishes; the votaries of a Pantheistic unity may pray appropriately for the power of realizing that unity; but the votaries of a Deistic creed are pledged, by the very definition of that creed, to abstain from bridging the gulf interposed between the creature and the Creator: Prayer is here

an inconsistency. Such was the form of faith which the first apprehension of the Copernican system forced upon the human mind. Man was driven far away from the centre of the universe, and felt himself to be alone. He seemed to stand on the furthest frontier of an infinite creation. Between him and the Source of his being there stretched a yawning chasm. The Catholic and the Jew could have filled up that chasm by the interposition of their celestial hierarchy; but the Protestant had banished the hierarchy, and the void was to him an absolute separation. The God of the Jew and the God of the Catholic, if they had not been permitted to descend into perfect communion with the soul, had at least been allowed to occupy the topmost round of a ladder which united earth and heaven. But when Protestantism swept away the angelic ladder, and when Science swept away the belief that this world was the centre of all worlds, the spirit of man felt what it never felt before—the desolation of a life which seemed to have lost the possibility of Divine communion. Must not Prayer now be abandoned as a dream and a delusion? Was there any longer a channel of communication by which the finite could reveal itself to the Infinite? Was it not presumption in a creature of the earth to expect the interest of the Supreme Being? What was this earth? It was only a grain of sand on the endless shore, an atom in the forms of immensity, a drop in the fathomless ocean. What was humanity in the full extent of its being, and in the ideal completion of its history? It was only a breath, a vapour; at best, a passing stream of thought, hurrying on to be engulfed in the waters of an unknown sea. Had it not become the truest philosophy in the

creature to abstain from seeking the Creator, to admit that the supernatural lay beyond the range of his vision, and to adapt his life more persistently to the requirements of the passing hour?

Here, then, was the beginning of that great conflict between the claims of Science and the instinct of Divine Communion, which has continued almost unceasingly through the course of three hundred years. It will be seen, however, that while the conflict has continued, the combatants have changed their battlefield. The earliest difficulty which the spirit of Religion encountered in its contact with the spirit of Science was the sense of individual nothingness imposed by the vastness of creation. It was pre-eminently the difficulty of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries; it is no longer the form of doubt distinctive of the nineteenth. The individual man of our day has ceased to be overawed by the aspect of the universe; and, however his scientific convictions may conflict with his religious aspirations, there is no longer any conflict on the ground of human inferiority. Nay, strange to say, the antagonism of the nineteenth century between the claims of Science and the instinct of Prayer has arisen from that very process of thought by which the original scepticism was destroyed, has built itself upon the ruins of that difficulty which perplexed the mind of the ages immediately succeeding the Reformation. The transformation is so curious that it deserves a passing attention.

The sense of individual nothingness was imparted by scientific investigation; the counteraction of that individual nothingness was to be imparted by the same investigation: from Science came the sting, and from

Science was to come the cure. For, let it be remembered, that at the very moment when the study of Nature was revealing to the human mind the vastness of the material system, it was preparing a revelation which in some respects was to bridge its vastness, and to restore to the human mind the importance it had taken away. That revelation was the discovery of what in modern times has been called "the principle of solidarity;" that is to say, a recognition of the truth that Nature, in its widest extent, is not a collective series of systems, but one great system bound into unity by one invisible chain. The science of the Copernican era had demonstrated that there intervened an infinite gulf between the lowest and the highest intelligences; the science of the succeeding ages was to demonstrate the counteracting truth, that the lowest and the highest of intelligences, however wide might be the interval between them, were members of the same economy, and were influenced by the same laws of being. When Newton discovered the law of gravitation, he took the first step in bridging the creative vastness, and in restoring to the spirit of man the sense of a possible communion with the Divine. The mythical story that Newton arrived at this law by observing the fall of an apple, however valueless it may be in historical fact, is deeply significant in philosophic thought. In the very statement that he had discovered a universal principle of Nature, he really promulgated the truth that the fall of an apple revealed the same species of creative power as the movement of the grandest orbs in the material firmament. In announcing that discovery he practically called attention to the fact, that the difference between small

and great had been reduced to a minimum ; that the lowest spheres of creation formed one empire with the highest ; and that the meanest forms of life were ruled by precisely the same principle which regulated the existence of the noblest and most beautiful. Nor was it possible that the human soul could recognize this without being lifted out of its sense of nothingness, and made to sit again in heavenly places. The ladder between earth and sky, which Protestantism had broken down, was replaced by Science ; and the void between heaven and earth, which Copernicus had revealed, was filled up by Newton. That work of reconstruction, begun by the eighteenth century, has been followed up and almost completed by the nineteenth. The distinctive work of our day has been the investigation and the unfolding of that great principle of unity which Newton recognized. The eighteenth century arrived at the recognition of one common law ; the nineteenth century has sought to travel a step further in the path of scientific unity, and has arrived at the recognition of one common force. The law of gravitation exhibited but the uniform rule according to which an unknown cause was seen to operate ; the aim of this age has been to trace out the cause itself, and, if possible, to discover that this also is a unity. The result of modern research has been eminently satisfactory. It has ended in the discovery of a principle which has already opened up to the human mind a new view of this universe, and materially altered our relations to all the spheres of our previous study : we allude to that scientific doctrine known as " the correlation of forces." It was something to believe that the mightiest forces in the universe acted through the same law in the

greatest and in the minutest departments of being : but here we are asked to believe something more—that the mightiest forces in creation are themselves identical with those which the ordinary spectator would pronounce to be mean and inglorious ; that the most splendid exhibitions of power and the highest manifestations of beauty which the aspect of Nature can reveal are, in so far as they are the result of second causes, the effect of one common agency, passing through various modifications, as it enters into new conditions. If it be so, the human mind is on the borders of a thought which must at once exalt the material and elevate the spiritual region. On this principle of the correlation of forces, the elements of all celestial beauty are already on the earth ; nay, are already within the life of the human organism. The life of man is, in a more literal sense than ever, a microcosm of the universe ; in him concentrate, in an individual unity, all the forces which scientific experience has found concentrated in the unity of Nature. Here, again, as in the law of gravitation, the human soul is redeemed from its original scepticism. Man has awakened from his sense of nothingness, to find that he is an essential member of the great body of Nature. The vast, the terrible, and the grand in the universe of material being, have ceased to overawe him ; for he has discovered that he is himself partaker of all those elements which, in the framework of visible Nature, have excited the sentiments of vastness, terror, and grandeur. Physical distance has ceased to be an obstacle to Divine communion ; for the distance is contemplated no longer as a void, but as the stretching of a continuous chain which binds together the lowliest

and the greatest : and the spirit of man has aroused itself from the ashes of humility to realize its oneness with the movement of universal Nature.

Thus far, then, the scientific research of the nineteenth century has revived the instinct of Prayer. It has solved the difficulty of the preceding ages ; it has redeemed man from that nothingness in the order of Nature which made Prayer subjectively an impossibility. But the nineteenth century has only removed one difficulty, to create another ; and it has created this second difficulty by the very answer it has given to the first. It has told us that Nature is not a vast void, but a vast chain of continuity whose links are never broken. But such a conception of the universe starts a new doubt in the religious consciousness. If the links are incapable of being broken, if the law is uniform and invariable, what room is there in Creation for the interposition of human will ? What avails it that I should project my desires into an undeviating order of effects and causes ? If each moment is rigidly determined by the moment which precedes it ; if every event is linked to the event which goes before by a necessary bond of sequence ; if there is not to be found in the universe one solitary region where spontaneity reigns and the iron chain of law is unknown ;—is it not at once the wildest ignorance and the most daring presumption in man to hope that he can alter these arrangements by the simple expression of his will in a religious act ? Shall the power of Prayer undo what the power of Omnipotence has done ?

Such is pre-eminently the question of the present age as regards the attitude of Religion and Science. A few years ago this question was brought to the front.

It was discussed in the leading articles of newspapers ; it was canvassed in the graver articles of periodicals ; it was taken up in the ecclesiastical courts ; it was debated in scientific circles ; it was a theme of discussion in the intercourse of the domestic household. Every man had something to say upon it, and every man's saying was professedly a new light on the subject. We must confess that none of the solutions has precisely satisfied us. It is not in the immediate season of controversy that the best solution of any difficulty is to be found ; the heat of argument dims the logical vision, and blunts the logical power. It is after the personalities of a party question have faded in the past that mankind are able to view the question irrespective of the party, and to utter a judgment unbiassed by prejudice. When Professor Tyndall was calling for an immediate test of the power of Prayer, and when the advocates of Prayer had to find immediate evidence that all scientific tests were precluded by the terms of the question, it was no favourable season for the calm investigation of a great problem. Now, however, that the heat of argument is past, we may, perhaps, look at the subject with a more impartial, and therefore with a more searching, gaze. Let us begin by examining one or two of those efforts at solution by which, from time to time, it has been attempted to stem the course of scientific scepticism.

The most common, and the most popular, answer to the difficulty raised by Science may be called the purely theological one. It takes its stand on the nature of God, and reasons down from its conception of his nature. Assuming the existence of a Supreme Being, such a Being must be free. If He be the Author of

all things, He must at the same time be the Ruler over all. The laws of Nature can have no independent existence, nor can these laws be said to be immutable in any sense irrespective of the will of the Lawgiver. He who made them can alter them at pleasure ; their being is simply the expression of his will, and their ceasing to be would be no more. The answer is undoubtedly founded on a pious sentiment. None the less it is based, as we conceive, on a mistaken view of the question at issue. When we say the Laws of Nature are immutable, we are thinking more of the past than of the future. We do not mean to affirm that we shall never enter into a system of things where the present laws will be modified. What we do mean is, that the present system of things is so linked with the chain of past effects and causes, that the notion of any intervention, either in its present arrangement, or in its past history as known to experience, involves a real or apparent contradiction of Science. To put it more simply : When we say that Nature is immutable, we popularly mean, not that it cannot change, but that, in point of fact, it does not change. Now, let it be observed, that this popular use of the word "immutable" leaves the scientific difficulty as strong as ever. Theology may tell what God can do ; experience alone can tell what God has done : and if experience should tell that God's laws in Nature have hitherto been unvaried, it will be but a small compensation to know that as a matter of possibility they are not invariable.

A second form of solution starts from the admission of the fact, that the laws of outward nature are invariable ; and from that fact draws the inference that the laws of outward nature cannot be the subjects of prayer.

Prayer can only extend to a region which is free and spontaneous, and the only region which is free and spontaneous is the domain of the human soul. *Herc*, therefore, is the legitimate sphere for the offering up of our petitions. The material universe is bound with an iron chain, and in that chain are included all those objects which constitute the temporal wants of men. Temporal wants, accordingly, must be remitted to another sphere than that of petition; they must be entrusted to the beneficent arrangement of a pre-ordained Nature, in whose order there is no variability, and from whose verdict there is no appeal. Yet there remains to the pious soul a region over which it may wander freely, a sphere where the promise may be abundantly fulfilled, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." The world of mind is the region of Prayer; spiritual wants, spiritual desires, spiritual aspirations are its legitimate objects, and the obtaining of spiritual blessings is its legitimate goal. Such is the refuge which many earnest minds believe they have discovered from the rigid empire of scientific unity. Yet candour compels us to admit that it is a refuge which will not stand. When we speak of the invariable Laws of Nature, we employ the word Nature as co-extensive with all experience; we include within its range the world of mind as well as the world of matter. One material cause is not more strongly linked to another than is every mental conception linked to that which precedes it and to that which follows it. The laws of the human soul are as determined as those of Nature, and they appear to be even less contingent. There is no spontaneity in the motions of the human mind; even the age of childhood, which is seemingly

its most spontaneous period, is a sphere in which each event is linked to its corresponding cause. Men, in their primitive ignorance of Nature, believed the winds to be the creatures of impulse ; men of scientific culture have found the winds to be as much the subjects of law as are the stars in their courses. So, in like manner, have we every reason to believe that in proportion as our knowledge of mental law becomes more distinct and definite, our impression of mental spontaneity will become more vague and shadowy. We shall cease to think of the spiritual region as a region in which the sequence of events and causes is unknown. We shall cease to think of the human soul as a series of capricious movements existing without order, and operating without logical result. We shall recognize the world of mind as of all worlds furthest removed from caprice, because we shall see in it that "law of the spirit of life" which gives life and law to all other things.

The last of the erroneous solutions which we shall here notice is that theory of Prayer, advocated by Theodore Parker and other divines of the extreme negative school, by which the value of Prayer is placed not in any benefit received *from* it, but in the mental calm produced *by* it. The value of Prayer, on this theory, is its own reflex influence ; in other words, the advantage of offering up a petition is not the petition itself, but the mental exercise of presenting it. We might oppose this theory on theological grounds. We might say that it is built on the enactment of a fiction. No petitioner prays for the sake of being calmed in the abstract ; he is calmed by the self-deception of believing that he has got something which he has not got. But we prefer to meet this view on the logical, rather

than the theological, ground. If a temporal prayer, by which we mean a prayer for temporal blessings, be not recognized as having an objective value, it cannot be admitted to have any value at all. In a case of spiritual aspiration, in a case where a man prays to be made good and holy, it is by no means difficult to discover that, whatever other benefit he may receive, he has already been benefited by the reflex influence of his own prayer. But why so? Because the very offering up of such a prayer indicates that the man is already more than half in possession of his object. He who prays to be made good is already good; that which we desire most is our ideal, and that which is our ideal is the measure of our highest nature. But when a man asks for temporal things, he gives expression to no more than a sense of temporal want — an expression which is no doubt quite legitimate, and which, in a dependent being, may be even the performance of a duty, but which can never in itself suffice to constitute the proof of a spiritual nature. All that a man can get from temporal prayer is temporal satisfaction; and the reflex influence of such prayer is nothing more than the anticipation of that satisfaction. If the prayer be outwardly granted, it may produce the reflex benefit of deepening trust; if it be not outwardly granted, the original reflex influence will simply share the fate of every disappointed secular hope—it will die in bitterness of spirit. If we are compelled, through scientific pressure, to surrender our belief in the outward reality of Prayer, we shall certainly not surrender it under the impression that we have found a substitute in the shadowy doctrine of a reflex influence.

Must we, then, surrender this objective belief? This

is the question to which our inquiry has narrowed itself. We have examined some solutions of the question, and have found them unsatisfactory. Are we prepared to suggest anything in their room?

It has always seemed to us that the true starting-point in such an inquiry is not the nature of external objects, but the character of Prayer itself. We must consider what is distinctively the Christian idea of Prayer—what it implies, and what it presupposes. Let us begin with the presuppositions. We believe it will be found that there are three things which the Christian idea of Prayer takes for granted, and that each one of these assumptions is supported by the admissions of Science.

The first thing which is assumed by the Christian idea of Prayer, is the immutability of the order of Nature. We have already examined three attempts to reconcile the possibility of Prayer with scientific unity. We found the first of these practically denying the immutability of Nature; the second denying the immutability of that region of Nature to which it proposed to limit Prayer; and the third fully admitting the immutability of Nature, but concluding, as a consequence, that Prayer was practically valueless. The standpoint taken by Christianity on this question is, in our view, different from any of these; perhaps we should best describe it as the direct antithesis of the last or reflex theory. The reflex theory maintains that there is a fixed order of Nature, and that therefore the offering up of human desires can have no objective value. The Christian idea of Prayer, as we understand it, is actually based upon the notion that there is a fixed order of Nature; and that which, in the reflex theory,

is its destruction, is, in its own view, the very source of its life. How this is, we shall see presently. In the mean time let us grasp the presupposition which underlies Prayer — the assumption of an immutable order. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; if this cup may not pass from me, thy will be done:"—*that* is the very essence of Christian Prayer; and it is also the very essence of scientific unity. The will of God, in the Christian sense, is not an arbitrary mandate interjected impulsively and capriciously between the sequences of Nature; it is itself the last result of these sequences. The will of God, in the view of Christianity, is the highest expression of the highest law; it is that which stands at the summit of universal order, and forms the climax to which all things have tended. To appeal, therefore, to the will of God is to appeal to universal Nature, to invoke that law of Nature in which all other laws are comprehended. Christian Prayer asks nothing which is not already in the universe, desires nothing which is not involved in the Divine Will. It offers no presumptuous request to have the order of things suspended, or the course of time diverted. Its highest rest is in the truth that there is an order which cannot be suspended, and a course which cannot be diverted; for it recognizes at the summit of the great sequence a Will in which there is no variableness, nor the least shadow of turning.

But there is a second presupposition in the Christian idea of Prayer. It takes for granted, not only that there is a Divine order, but that this order is unknown to us; in other words, that we need Revelation. It admits that the law of Nature is immutable, but it desires to know what the law of Nature is. With this

presupposition also Science is in perfect harmony. Science does not profess to have found the central principle of the natural universe; Mr. Herbert Spencer says that that principle is perfectly inscrutable. Science has not even discovered the minuter details of that law of uniformity which it actually beholds. Nothing is more certain, for instance, than is the fact that a perfect scientific knowledge could predict what weather we shall have to-morrow. That is a point already determined; it is involved in the sequence of Nature. Yet nothing is more certain than that no scientific man would peril his reputation upon an absolute prophecy of the complexion of to-morrow's sky. Still less would any man of science venture dogmatically to predict the particular line of action which, in any given case, would be followed by a human will, even where the general motives of that will were within the range of his knowledge. From the scientific point of view the actions of men are just as certain in their futurity as are the future operations of natural law; and a perfect intelligence could, by a simple intensification of natural power, predict the one as easily as the other. Yet, in both cases, the law of Nature in its minutest details, as long as it is yet in the future, remains a mystery. There have been men who have professed to foretell the events of life, and we regard these men as aspirants to the supernatural. Yet it is perfectly clear that, in order to possess such a power, there is required an intelligence the reverse of supernatural: the possibility of such prophetic gift is founded on the uniform sequence of Nature, and he who has possessed it can only have done so by a more intense perception of the laws of human thought.

Here, then, are two presuppositions of Prayer—the immutability of the law of Nature and the inscrutability of the law of Nature. The third and final presupposition is, the possibility that, in individual instances, the veil of inscrutability may be lifted ; in other words, the belief that the Source of Creation is in communion with creation. Now, strange to say, this point is also practically conceded by Science. According to the modern doctrine of forces, there is one inscrutable and ultimate force which is everywhere present and everywhere persistent, and in which all other forms and forces live and move and have their being. The universe is but its manifestation, the laws of the universe are but its expression. Christianity employs a different terminology, but it asks no more. It only desires the possibility of some communication from the Infinite to the finite. Like Science, it perceives an immutable Nature : like Science, it recognizes its ignorance of that Nature ; and, like Science, it forecasts the hope that the law which is unknown will in some way manifest its presence.

Now the mode of this manifestation, in the view of Christianity, is Prayer. Everything in that Religion has two sides, the one human and the other Divine. Prayer, on its human side, is the creature desiring a gift from the Creator ; but prayer, on the Divine or higher side, is the Creator prompting the creature to desire. The ultimate conception of Prayer is not the idea of man asking of God ; but the idea of God revealing to man what he ought to ask, in other words, prophesying in the human soul what is the eternal and immutable law of Nature. Wherever Prayer is effectual, its effectuality is referred to the fact that it has been

prompted by the Divine Spirit. Man is uniformly represented as incapable of asking aright, as ignorant of the road to his own happiness, as liable to desire what would promote his pain. Hence the very key-note of the Christian idea of Prayer is given in that request of the disciples to the Master which called forth the form of petition known as the Lord's Prayer. "Teach us to pray," was the utterance in which the disciples expressed their ignorance of the immutable law of Nature; and the answer they received assumes that they were right in refusing to offer up their individual desires. The Lord's Prayer in the Christian Church is intended to represent the spirit of all Prayer, and it is therefore of special importance. In this form of petition the prominent characteristic, from beginning to end, is the surrender of the human will to the Divine. The earliest requests are made, not for the objects of individual happiness, but for the working out of the eternal and immutable Law to its beneficent conclusion and its highest goal—the hallowing of the Father's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the fulfilment of his will throughout the universe. It is only when the last of these points has been realized that the petitioner is permitted to contemplate his personal necessities; it is only when he can say, "Thy will be done," that he feels himself entitled to ask for his daily bread. He only does ask for his daily bread on the supposition that the granting of that request is involved in the universal Law; or, which is the same thing, in the purpose of the ultimate Will. His prayer will be a source of comfort to him just in proportion as it is a source of prophecy. If he believes that the bestowal of any external blessing is involved in the purpose of the ulti-

mate Will, the objective value of Prayer will be to him the fact that it prefigures the purpose and predicts the coming good. If he is in doubt whether the external blessing which he desires is involved in that order of Nature which is the expression of the ultimate Will, the comfort of his prayer in that case will not be its objective or prophetic value, but the recognition of the fact that there *is* an order of Nature. For, let it be remembered, that, after all, Christian Prayer is not essentially a series of petitions ; it is the expression of one fundamental desire running through all petitions and conditioning them all—the desire to be made acquiescingly harmonious with the order of Nature and the will of Him whom that order expresses. To say, “If it be thy will,” is not a form of mere religious courtesy, equivalent to the conventional “If you please :” to regard it as such, is simply to fall back from the Christian into the Pagan idea of Prayer. There is the same difference between the Christian and the Pagan idea of Prayer as there is between the Christian and the Pagan idea of sin. Paganism knows nothing of sin ; it knows only of sins : it has no conception of the principle of evil ; it comprehends only a collection of evil acts. So, in like manner, Paganism knows nothing of Prayer ; it knows only of prayers : it has no conception of a fundamental desire ; it comprehends only individual wishes. The essence of heathen prayer is, to ask what we want ; the essence of Christian prayer is, to ask what God wants, to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” It is because so large a number of nominally Christian prayers are really heathen petitions, that men have looked with alarm upon the rigid chain of unity

which physical science is weaving. In proportion as that chain expands, the prayers of Paganism must indeed more and more become philosophically impossible. The individual who sets up his own wishes as an absolute standard of desire, will be forced to learn that the law of Nature is equally with the law of Morality the enemy of human selfishness. He who asks a gift without reference to that universal kingdom of which he is a member, is performing an act distinctively Pagan, and is therefore pursuing a course distinctly unscientific. The popular expectations of heathendom were built upon the ignorance of Nature. Men had not reached the truth, that they were the subjects of one great law, and therefore they had not reached the truth, that they were members one of another. Their prayers were simply the expression of a child's individual desires. Science came, and that form of religion was no longer possible; but, long before it became impossible, it had been found to be unnecessary to man. Science came to proclaim that there was in Nature a principle of absolute unity; but a power was in the field before her, proclaiming the same truth in yet more urgent tones. Christianity anticipated the last voice of Science. She spoke, no doubt, in the moral sphere; but, to her, the moral sphere was the apex of the universe, and therefore the source of natural unity. The message of Christianity had the same relation to the prayers of Paganism as was borne by the message of Science. It told the individual that he was only one member of a universal commonwealth, and that he must not seek his life apart from the life of the whole. It told him that the law of his highest being was the law of universal

being, and that he only truly found himself by losing himself in the universal life. Christianity produced on the idea of Prayer the same transforming influence which it effected on all the other ideas of Natural Religion. It borrowed from the sphere of Nature the words "God," "Immortality," and "Providence;" but it no longer used the words to denote the ancient thought: the God and immortality and providence of Natural Theology passed away when the light of Christianity appeared. Even so, in the moral world, there remained something which seemed like the continuance of Pagan supplication; but the only link of connection between them was the sense of human dependence. Man in Christianity, like man in Paganism, still felt that he was in want of something; but man in Christianity no longer felt that he wanted the same thing. Paganism had questioned what it should eat, and what it should drink, and wherewithal it should be clothed; Christianity perceived that none of these things constituted the essence of human need. Paganism desired the gratification of the individual life; Christianity started with the definite assumption that the only ultimate gratification which that life could find was to cease from its own self-seeking, and desire the universal good. Christian prayer has become the antithesis of heathen supplication; and it has reached this antithesis by entering into union with that scientific life of Nature where the interest of the one is the interest of the many, and where the liberty of the individual is the service of the highest law.

GEORGE MATHIESON.

THE GOSPEL FOR PENITENTS; AND CHRIST
WRITING ON THE GROUND.

ST. JOHN vii. 53-viii. 11.

THERE is not a line of the narrative of the Woman taken in Adultery, which is not full of the deepest interest, both historical and moral; and the condition in which we find the narrative in the Original, not only gives room for the most delicate exercise of the critical faculty, but also involves questions of the utmost importance in the appreciation of textual criticism. It is not my object, in the present paper, to re-open the many questions which the narrative suggests, but chiefly to touch upon a single feature of it. In my "Life of Christ"¹ I have endeavoured to set forth the inestimable moral value of the story, and have ventured to express my conviction that, whatever conclusion may be formed on the authenticity and canonical value of the passage, it bears upon its very face unmistakable proof that it preserves for us a true and most precious account of a very memorable incident in our Saviour's history.

The genuineness of the passage — the *pericope adulterae*, as it is technically called — is elaborately examined in many editions of the Gospel of St. John; as, for instance, in Lampe, Lücke, Meyer, Alford, and Wordsworth; and is more or less fully handled by Bishop Ellicott,² Professor Milligan,³ Scrivener,⁴ and McClellan.⁵ The entire tendency of modern criticism has been to abandon the Johannine authorship of the

¹ Vol. ii. pp. 61-73.² "Historical Lectures," p. 253.³ "Words of the New Testament," p. 207.⁴ "Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament," p. 439.⁵ "The New Testament," p. 719.

passage, and even to remove it from its present place in the Received Text. Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Wetstein, all rejected it; as also do Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Lücke, Meyer, Alford, Keim, and Scrivener; and there can be no more decisive proof of the strength of the *diplomatic* evidence against it, than that Bishop Wordsworth, with all his intensely conservative spirit in these matters, says "that it is not to be called a part of canonical Scripture, as the rest of St. John's Gospel is canonical Scripture," although he considers that it may have come *orally* from St. John, and so have been written in the margin, from whence it crept gradually into the text.

But as the latest writer on the subject — Mr. McClellan — has stoutly maintained the genuineness, authenticity, and canonical authority of the passage, perhaps some of our readers, who do not possess the books to which I have referred, may be glad of a simple and rapid summary of the elements on which the question must be decided, before we draw their attention to the special incident of Christ's writing on the ground.

The sources from which the true text of the Greek Testament can alone be derived — for conjectural emendation, except, perhaps, in one single passage,¹ is out of the question—are (1) the Manuscripts, (2) the Ancient Versions, and (3) the early Fathers.

1. Manuscripts are of two classes, *uncial* and *cursive*. Uncials are so called from being written in disconnected letters, since regarded as capitals. They

¹ Col. iii. 18, where *κενεμπατεύων*, which has occurred to Dr. Lightfoot and others, is at once suggested by the Homœoteleuton, and has much in its favour. Most attempts at conjectural alteration of the text—*e.g.*, Bentley's suggestion of *πορκείας*, "swine's flesh," for *πορρείας*, in Acts xv. 20—are very unhappy.

range from the fourth to the ninth or tenth century.¹ At this period begin the *cursives*, so called from being written in current hand, with the letters joined together, with spaces between the words, and with the use of punctuation. It might therefore be assumed that the evidence of a cursive manuscript, being so late, could have no value in comparison with that of an uncial. This, however, is not always certain. Some, at least, of the cursives have been copied from manuscripts perhaps as ancient and as valuable as any that we possess, and one or two of them at least are so good and so valuable, that their evidence cannot be entirely rejected.²

2. The most important Ancient Versions are the Peshito-Syriac and the old Latin Version, usually known as the *Vetus Itala*. After these in value, as evidence of the original text, are the Curetonian Syriac, Egyptian, Vulgate, Gothic, Armenian, and Æthiopic.

3. Quotations in the Fathers, though of course liable to the possibilities of variation from the mere accident that the quotations were so often made from memory, are yet important as a proof of all *salient features* in any passage, and are specially important to decide the existence or non-existence of certain passages in the authorized manuscripts of early centuries.

1. Now, if we went by this evidence alone, the simplest reader may see that the genuineness of John vii. 53-viii. 11 could hardly be defended.

For (a) out of the seventeen uncials it is omitted

¹ "Derived from *uncia*, an inch, as though the letters were an inch long. The term seems to be derived from Jer. Præf. in Job, *Uncialibus, ut vulgo aiunt, literis*; but the reading here may be *initialibus*."—Scrivener, "Criticism of New Testament," p. 25.

² For instance, the cursives numbered 1. 33. 69. 71.

by eight, namely, the *Codex Sinaiticus* (Ⲙ), the *Vaticanus* (B), and by T. X. It is omitted, as proved by a calculation of lines, by the *Codex Alexandrinus* (A) and *Codex Ephraemi* (C); and, with small gaps, to shew the omission, by L, 4; and it is marked with stars and daggers, to shew its dubiousness, by E, M, S, 4.

(β) In fifty-three *cursives* it is omitted, or placed at the end of the Gospel; and of these the important Codex 1 says that "it is absent in the greatest number of copies," and Codex 237, that "it is not found in the more accurate copies."

2. Of the Versions, it is omitted by the *Vetus Itala*, the Gothic, the oldest copies of *both* the Egyptian (Memphitic and Sahidic), the Peshito-Syriac, and the Armenian.

3. Of the ancient Fathers, it is not mentioned or commented on by the Greek Fathers, Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, or Cyril of Alexandria, nor by the Latin Fathers, Tertullian and Cyprian.

1. At first sight this evidence looks overwhelmingly unfavourable. But this is by no means all. For though the passage is found in seven uncials and three hundred cursives, and in the *Æthiopic Version*, and is quoted by the "Apostolic Constitutions," and by Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, yet the actual text is almost hopelessly uncertain, because the manuscripts vary in almost every word.

2. Even *this* is not all.

(1) Without going so far as to say that "the passage gratuitously interrupts the narrative," it can hardly, I think, be denied that it coheres somewhat loosely with it, coming, as it does, as an isolated incident in

the midst of long and solemn discourses.¹ This may perhaps be one of the reasons why, in some ten *cursives*, the *pericope* is placed at the end of St. John's Gospel; and in four it is singularly transferred to Luke xxi. 38, as though dependent on the statement that, on each night of Passion week, Jesus "went to the Mount of Olives."

3. Further: no fair critic can possibly deny that the evidence in favour of its Johannine authorship is greatly weakened by the fact that, in the short space of eleven verses, it contains *expressions* and *idioms* not elsewhere found in St. John; and that a critic like Alford, who had a lifelong familiarity with the Greek text of the Gospels, pronounces "the whole cast and character of the passage to be alien from the manner of St. John." It is not only that such words as *without sin* (ἀναμάρτητος), and *in the very act* (ἐπαντοφώρῳ), and *caught* (κατειλημένην), and *stooping down* (κύψας), are found here only; and *daunt* (ὀρθρος), and *remain* (ἐπιμένειν), and *to be left behind* (καταλείπεσθαι), and *went unto* (πορεύομαι εἰς), and *came into* (παραγίνομαι εἰς). If this were all, it might be fairly said that it may be due to the nature of the narratives, just as ten *hapax legomena* (i.e., absolutely unique expressions) occur in John xi. 31-44. Again, it may be purely accidental that the *Mount of Olives* is nowhere else mentioned in the Fourth Gospel; and its introduction without an explanation is less important than Alford supposed.² But it is

¹ Attempts have been made to shew that it bears on, or is illustrative of, those discourses; but the supposed points of connection are so verbal and arbitrary, that by the same method almost any passage could be proved to be appropriate. Who, for instance, will agree with Mr. McClellan in thinking that the appropriateness of the passage in this place is shewn by the connection of "I am the light of the world" (Verse 12) with "the produced effect of spiritual light in the heart of the believer"? There is more to be said for its connection with Verse 15.

² See John xviii. 1.

much more damaging to the genuineness of the passage that such common expressions as *the Scribes* (οἱ Γραμματεῖς), and *all the people* (πᾶς ὁ λαός), in the sense of "multitude," and *sitting down He began to teach them* (καθίσας ἐδίδασκεν αὐτούς), are found here alone in this Gospel; and still more so that *and* (δὲ) is found no less than eleven times in these eleven verses, and not once in the next forty-eight, though in those verses *then* or *therefore* (οὖν), which is St. John's usual connecting particle in narrations, occurs no less than thirteen times. Mr. McClellan sweeps this consideration aside, with several notes of admiration, as "flimsy argument;" but his reply does not fairly meet the force of the objection, for most assuredly he would find no other similar narrative passage in the whole Gospel where ἐκ occurs so often, and in which οὖν occurs but once.

4. It may be asked, then, why the passage is still to be retained, in spite of evidence both external and internal, both *diplomatic* and *paradiplomatic*, which seems much stronger than that which is regarded as entirely decisive against other readings, verses, and passages?

The answer is plain. It is to be retained because, supposing it to be spurious, there is no possibility of accounting for its insertion; and, supposing it to be genuine, there is every reason to explain its rejection. Further than this, it bears on the face of it so divine an impress; it shews in the conduct of our Saviour so unapproachable a wisdom, so consummate a tenderness, so profound an insight into the heart of man, that it is not at all too much to say that there was no writer of the first four centuries who had the heart to conceive,

or the head to express, such an incident, if it had not really occurred in the life of Christ.

II. Its exclusion from the Church lectionaries, and so in part from the text, gives us a sad glimpse into the early degeneracy of the Church from its original purity and wisdom. The passage was passed over on the principle of "*œconomy*," because it was regarded as *dangerous*; and it was thought dangerous because it ran counter to the ascetic and semi-gnosticizing tendencies which, even in the lifetime of the apostles, began to infect the Church.

It was thought "dangerous" in two respects.

a. It is probable, though there is no direct trace of this motive, that the early Christians, assailed by infamous calumnies as to the character of their meetings, wished to cut away all possibility of the remarks of impious pagan readers upon the text, which said that "Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."¹ Nay, more, to all Judæo-Christians, and to all who to any extent inherited their traditional conceptions, that passage would be displeasing. When Jesus talked with the Woman of Samaria under the broad noon, beside the well, his disciples " marvelled that he was talking with *a woman*" (μετὰ γυναῖκός). An ordinary Rabbi would have regarded such conduct as inexcusably lax. Rabban Gamaliel II. subjected himself to the severest censure for remarking that a woman was beautiful; and even when the defence was put forth on his behalf that he had only expressed abstract admiration, exactly as if he had made the same remark of a cow or a camel, the Talmudists are obliged to

¹ "Probabile est a sanctulis quibusdam abjectam esse, qui nescio quam ignominiam Servatoris affricari putarunt, quando legitur ipsum solum cum adulterâ solâ relictum fuisse."—Schöttgen, *Hor. Hebr.* p. 365.

furnish fresh excuses for the mere accident of his meeting and looking at a woman on the public road at all. Much more, then, might some readers have been foolishly and ignorantly offended by the notion that Jesus was left alone with a convicted sinner. They missed, in their narrowness, the sublime emblem of that scene in which Mercy and Misery stood in God's Temple face to face.

β. This consideration was, however, in any case, entirely subordinate. The chief reason why the narrative was regarded as "dangerous," was its supposed tendency to support too ready a condonation of guilt, and therefore to furnish an incentive to sin. This motive is not only charged by St. Augustine on those who omitted the narrative, but its liability to perversion is distinctly urged by others as a reason for not reading the section in the public service. Thus St. Ambrose¹ says that the reading of the passage might suggest serious difficulties to the unlearned. "For certainly, if any one received it with idle ears, he meets an incentive to error when he reads of the adultery of a saint (David) and the pardon of an adulteress." Similarly, St. Augustine says that the passage so far revolts the feelings of the faithless, "that some of small faith, or, rather, foes of true faith," fearing lest an impunity of sinning should be conceded to their wives, removed the passage from their manuscripts, "as though forsooth *He* granted a permission to sin who said, 'Go and sin no more.'" Lastly, Nikon, the Armenian abbot, says that the story had been deliberately expunged from manuscripts of the Armenian Version by some who said "that the hearing of such a passage was baleful to the many."

¹ *Apol. David.* ii. 1.

We see, then, at once that the passage was too merciful—in other words, too divine—for vast multitudes of Christians in the early Church. Accustomed to repress adultery, or at least to attempt its repression, by penances of the most intense and long-continued severity, they fancied that they could be wiser than their Saviour. They could hardly have been so presumptuous as to imagine that they had a deeper hatred for sin than He, or that they understood better than He did the means of repressing it; and yet they acted on the principle that terror was a more effectual method for the check of uncleanness, than compassion and forgiveness. Had they studied the narrative with a more humble reverence, they would have learnt lessons respecting sin and punishment far deeper and more sacred than any which were dreamt of in their philosophy.

III. But if this dogmatic preconception led to the suppression or misplacement of the passage, it accounts also for the omission of some of the Fathers to comment on, or allude to it. Some of them were avowedly actuated by the principle of *æconomy*; that is, they believed that truth required to be *administered*, and, I had almost said *manipulated*, in certain ways. They regarded some doctrines as purely esoteric. Certain facts of Christianity were true, but they held them to be unsuited to the multitude, as liable to be perverted and abused, and therefore best fitted to be kept in the background for the private illumination of a favoured few. This is no place to enter into a full examination of this principle of *æconomy*. Whatever may be said in its favour, it is quite clear that, while it professed to obviate abuses, it is itself liable to flagrant abuse, and opens a “dangerous” door to

dishonesty and subterfuge. We see how dangerous it is when we find Tertullian admitting that a book is apocryphal, and yet arguing that its canonicity should be defended because it is useful against heretics; and, again, when we find that Origen and others believed it to be the teaching of Scripture that the door of God's mercy was not necessarily closed at death, and yet recommended that this truth should not be preached to the people, lest they should make it an excuse for sin. Now, such a mode of action is utterly alien from the principles of Scripture and of Christianity. Such *economy* was not the principle of St. Paul, who fully and faithfully preached the truths entrusted to him, though he knew that they were grossly distorted by the ignorant, and misrepresented by the unjust. It was not the principle of St. Peter, who spoke of the wisdom and inspiration of St. Paul, though he said that "those who were unlearned and unstable" wrested some of his writings, as they did also the other Scriptures, "to their own destruction." It was not the principle of St. Gregory the Great, when he said, "It is better that an offence should arise, than that truth should be suppressed." It was not the principle of the Church of England, when she stated her view of Predestination, though well aware that, for "curious and carnal persons," it might prove to be "a most dangerous downfall, whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation." But what need have we of earthly witnesses? It was not the principle of Christ. He spoke to all, and to all alike. He had no truth more esoteric for the learned Pharisee at midnight, than for the lonely, ignorant, sinful woman

by the noonday well ; and He did many a deed which men have misinterpreted, and uttered many a word which they have distorted into a plea for wrong and error, because He was true, and the Truth, and because, "Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar."

To sum up, then : we see what principles were working at a very early age, to cause the exclusion of this section from the Church lessons at public worship ;¹ and we can see at once why its absence from the lectionaries would tend first to its relegation to the end of the Gospel, and then to its total disappearance from many Manuscripts and many Versions. The silence of many of the Fathers is similarly accounted for, however unwise that silence was. Origen was avowedly influenced by the principle of *œconomy*. Cyril, patriarch of such a city as Alexandria, and Chrysostom of Byzantium, were only too likely to dread any teaching which they most erroneously supposed would tend to greater laxity among populations so depraved. Such motives would be still more likely to work with St. Cyprian, accustomed as he was to a Church discipline against adultery of inexorable sternness ; and with such a writer as Tertullian, severe by temperament, and full of gloomy Montanism and exaggerated fancies as to the superior glory of the virgin life. It is to the credit of St. Jerome that, hermit as he was, he did not yield to these seductive influences ; and the Church owes to him, to St. Ambrose, and to St. Augustine, a debt of gratitude for what Mr. McClellan rightly calls their "greater courage and faithfulness" in reasserting the authority of the passage

¹ Part of it, however (viii. 3-11), called the "Gospel for Penitents," was used in the Greek Church at such festivals as that of St. Pelagia.

against the insidious and disintegrating effects of dogmatic prejudice.

IV. But while these considerations, and others of a minuter character, into which we have no space to enter, *entirely break down* the apparent array of evidence against the passage, and strengthen the force of the evidence which may be adduced in its favour, they are entirely ineffectual to explain its divergence from the style of St. John, its immense varieties of reading, or its disruptive effect on the continuity of the narrative. These circumstances can never be explained except conjecturally. Eusebius,¹ among other "testimonies" from the weak and credulous Papias, says that "he has put forth also another history of a woman accused² before the Lord of many sins, which the Gospel of the Hebrews contains." This may, or may not, be an allusion to the incident of the section; but since the Gospel of the Hebrews was known to some of the Fathers, and was even translated by St. Jerome, it seems *most* improbable that any interpolation from its pages could have found its way into the Sacred Text. The variations of reading are, indeed, reducible to the existence of *three* main recensions; but why should there have been these three? This question cannot be answered. It is now believed by many critics that St. John here incorporated into his Gospel a fragment of oral tradition, without altering any of its phraseology.³ However this may be, there is good

¹ *H. E.* iii. 39.

² διαβληθείσης. Mr. McClellan ("The New Testament," pp. 231, 722) seems to me to fail entirely to prove that this means "*secretly* accused." Both in classical and later Greek it means in general "*falsely* accused." It only occurs in Luke xvi. 1.

³ This would also account for the apparent misplacement of the story in chronological order; for though I have given reasons for rejecting the conjecture of

reason to believe that the "Gospel for Penitents" was a *very early* marginal addition to St. John's narrative in the place where we now find it, and one which, whether sanctioned by the Apostle himself or not, yet most providentially preserves for us a fact inestimably precious in the life of our blessed Lord.

V. Now one of the many characteristic touches of this golden *pericope* is the personal bearing of Christ under the odious circumstances of this malignant accusation. I will not attempt to reproduce the scene, or the motives of the actors, on which I have spoken fully in my "Life of Christ."¹ But since no action of our Lord is unimportant, least of all at such a moment, it will, I think, be interesting to examine further the reasons for his stooping down and writing on the ground.

1. I set aside as impossible and irrelevant the inquiry as to *what* Jesus wrote. A very early conjecture on the subject may be found in the Uncial Manuscript U, which adds to the Received Text that "He wrote on the earth the sins of each one of them;"² and it is just possible that this, which is adopted by St. Jerome, may be inferred from Jeremiah xvii. 13, "O Lord, they

Hitzig, that it properly belongs to Mark xii. ("Life of Christ," ii. 61, 233), yet undoubtedly it would seem, from viii. 1, to belong to the narrative of Passion Week.

¹ I take this opportunity of saying that those who have charged me with an unwarrantable use of the 'imagination in my "Life of Christ" have done me an injustice. If they will find me a single unwarrantable detail, or touch which is introduced solely for the sake of vivid portraiture or graphic reproduction, I should at once be willing to run my pen through it. It is easier to make than to substantiate these sweeping and careless criticisms. I scrupulously avoided every colour and every detail which was not distinctly suggested by, or involved in, the certain surroundings of the text, the minute touches of which are often obliterated in our English Version, or are lost sight of by mere familiarity with the particular form of words.

² Ἐγραφεὺν εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐνδὲς ἐκάστου αὐτῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας. The picturesque imperfect ἔγραφευ is an incidental mark of genuineness. For other strange conjectures, see Lampe and Fabricius, *Cod. Apoc.*

that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and *they that depart from me shall be written in the earth.*" Bengel, referring to this same Verse, thinks that He may have written down *the names of the accusers*, or that He wrote down, 'Ο ἀναμαρτητος ὑμῶν (Verse 7)¹—a tradition adopted in the well-known picture. That He actually wrote words, and did not merely, as some suggest, go through the mere *semblance* of writing, may, I think, be assumed from the phrase employed ; and we may remark in passing that it is the only passage from which we learn that our Lord knew the art of writing. "Once," says Bengel, "in the Old Testament, God wrote the Decalogue ; once, in the New Testament, Christ wrote. But He wrote with his finger, and on the earth, not on the air or on a tablet."

2. But though we can never know *what* He wrote, is it possible to know *why* He wrote ?

The conjectures are many and various.

(a) St. Ambrose² says that it was to remind us that, when we judge of another's sins, we ought to remember our own. "You Scribes write judgments upon others : I, too, can write them against you."³

(b) St. Augustine⁴ sees in it an emblem that the law of God, to which the Scribes were making their appeal, had been written on earthly and stony hearts : "He gave unto Moses two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."⁵

(c) Bengel, among various other surmises, sees in the action a partial reminiscence of the ordeal of jealousy, in which dust was given in water to the suspected woman.⁶

¹ So, too, Fabricius, *Cod. Apoc.* 315.

² *De Spir. Sanct.* iii. 3.

³ Bengel.

⁴ *De Cons. Evang.* iv. 10.

⁵ Exod. xxxi. 18.

⁶ Num. v. 14-29.

(d) Michaelis thinks that He meant to imply the answer, "What is written in your Law?"

(e) Bold, ingenious, and eminently original is the view of the author of "*Ecce Homo*." After describing the intolerable shamelessness and malice of the accusers, he continues:¹ "The effect upon Jesus was such as might have been produced upon many since, but perhaps hardly on any man that ever lived before. He was seized with an intolerable sense of shame. In the burning embarrassment and confusion, He stooped down, so as to hide his face, and began writing with his finger on the ground. His tormentors continued their clamour until He raised his head for a moment, and said, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her;' and then instantly returned to his former attitude. They had a glimpse, perhaps, of the glowing blush upon his face, and awoke suddenly, with astonishment, to a new sense of their condition and conduct. The older men naturally felt it first, and slunk away; the younger followed their example. The crowd dissolved, and left Christ alone with the woman. Not till then could He bear to stand upright; and when He had lifted Himself up, consistently with his principle, He dismissed the woman, as having no commission to interfere with the office of the civil judge. But the mighty power of living purity had done its work. He had refused to judge a woman, but He had judged a crowd. He had awakened the slumbering conscience in many hardened hearts, given them a new delicacy, a new ideal, a new view and reading of the Mosaic law."

(f) I would not exclude this hypothesis, because, if

¹ P. 98.

He who knew the human sigh and the human tear knew also the human glow of noble shame, then, if ever, this was an occasion on which such a glow of pure and divine indignation might have mantled "that face on which the angels desire to look." But this does not exclude the yet more probable suggestion that He stooped and wrote to avoid importunity, to express his determination not to interfere in this affair. Thus we are told by an ancient gloss that He stooped and wrote, *μὴ προσποιούμενος*, intimating his non-attention to them, a reading found in E, G, K, and most of the cursives. "Those," says Euthymius, "are accustomed to act thus who do not choose to answer persons who put to them inopportune or unworthy questions. For, recognizing their plot, He made believe to write on the ground, and not to attend to the things they said." They would doubtless draw their own lessons from his conduct, but his primary object was to imply an "intentional inattention"¹ — *tamquam in aliam rem intentus* (says Melancthon), *prorsus a se rejiciens hanc quæstionem*.

Thus interpreted, the action finds its parallels both in Rabbinic and classic literature. "Without uttering a syllable," says Plutarch, "by merely raising the eyebrows, or stooping down, or fixing the eyes upon the ground, you may baffle unreasonable importunities; for silence is an answer to wise men."² That a similar custom was recognized by the Jews appears in the Talmudic story that, on one occasion, R. Ukba sent to

¹ "As though He did not, or would not, hear them."—"Life of Christ," ii. 66.

² Cf. Athen. ii. 59. E. *κέψαντες χρόνον οὐκ ὀλίγον ἀεφρόντιζον*. Aristoph. *Ach.* 31. *ἀπορῶ, γραφῶ, . . . λογίζομαι* (*ibi* Schol. *ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν οἱ . . . τὸν χρόνον δαπανῶντες εἰς ἀπορίαν*). Schol. ad Eur. *Orest.* 631 (Wetstein).

R. Eleazar, to tell him that he had some deadly enemies, whom, if he chose, he could denounce to the civil government, and to ask what he should do. R. Eleazar, without saying a word, simply took a piece of vellum, and leisurely wrote down Psalm xxxix. 2, to imply the duty of forgiveness. When R. Ukba sent him a yet more urgent message as to the malice of these enemies, Eleazar again said not a word, but wrote down Psalm xxxvii. 7, to imply the duty of leaving our wrongs in the hand of God.¹

(g) In this explanation we might fairly acquiesce, though we may well suppose that, in the divine and many-sided wisdom of our Lord's slightest acts, what He did might find many solemn and diverse interpretations in the consciences of those who witnessed it, just as, in Jewish legend, all the nations who heard the ten words at Sinai interpreted them into their own language. We would not, for instance, at all exclude such secondary objects as that also mentioned by Euthymius, namely, that He stooped "in order that the Scribes might not be ashamed by his eye being fixed upon them, being thus more easily convicted (by their own consciences) ; and that, as though He were occupied in writing, they might retire before receiving a more open condemnation. *For them too He spared, because of the abundance of his kindness.*"

(h) I add a single illustration, which, so far as I am aware, has never before been made public, but which, if it receives confirmation, throws a new light on the narrative, and contains a fresh proof of its authenticity. "The venerable M. Charpiot," writes a correspondent to me, "pastor in the Hautes Alpes, once related to

¹ Schöttgen, *Hor. Heb. in loc.*

me that, whilst living in Algeria, he was witness of a scene which brought before him in living reality the story of the Woman taken in Adultery. He was going out of Algiers, when, not far from the gate, his attention was arrested by a group of Arabs, who were discussing together. He approached, and saw that one of them had bent down, and *was writing with his finger in the dust*. The debate continued, when again there was a moment's pause, and the Arab, effacing what he had just written, wrote again. M. Charpiot hastened to ask an explanation of this conduct, which had so greatly impressed him. It seems that a discussion had been going on. The Arab who had stooped down had written on the sand the first point on which the discussion had turned. After a few moments, since all were agreed on this point, he had effaced what he had first written, in order to write down the new subject of debate."

My unknown correspondent therefore thinks that this may be some immemorial Eastern custom, and that, when the Scribes and Pharisees brought the woman, to ask what should be done with her, reminding our Lord of the Mosaic law, he raised no opposition to their statement of the law, but agrees with them to adopt it, and stoops to write it down. But since they continue to press Him with questions, He in turn suggests the next step of the discussion as to what is to be done, by saying, "Let him that is without sin among you first cast the stone at her." Then again He stoops down to write this new point of agreement; but while He is doing so, the accusers, convicted of their own guilt, abashed by the silent working of their own consciences, slink away from the admitted con-

sequences of the very premises on which, in order to entrap and hamper Him, they had so unblushingly persisted.

On this point readers must form their own judgment, but it seemed not undesirable to preserve the record of so remarkable a custom. Assuming that it has been correctly reported, it furnishes a new and unexpected illustration of this interesting incident, which the Church of God has long learnt to see in its true light, as one of the brightest proofs of the healing tenderness of the Sinless towards the sinful.

F. W. FARRAR.

THE NINETEENTH PSALM:

READ IN THE LIGHT OF ANCIENT NATURE-WORSHIP.

IT is now ascertained that the ancient religions of Nature did not after all differ so widely among themselves as they appear to do. Most of us make our first acquaintance with heathenism under the classical dress which it wore during the later days of Greece and Rome. These gods of Olympus, with the confused and contradictory tales regarding them, are scarcely to be recognized for the same thing with the earlier and simpler mythologies of Syria, Egypt, or Chaldæa. Yet they were as surely a development, or a corruption, of those more primitive beliefs, as Greek art was the offspring of an older Asiatic art. The better we get to know the ancient faiths of the world and their history, the more plainly does it appear that at their root they possessed a common origin, and that similar ruling ideas ran through them all.

Perhaps the chief fact concerning them which modern

research has laid bare is this, that the primary religions of our race had an astronomical basis. In other words, it was the revelation of the Godhead in the heavenly bodies which first and most powerfully affected the religious instincts of our young race. It is not at all surprising that it should have been so. This common and bounded earth we tread is encompassed by a boundless upper world, which, to unsophisticated minds, is the very home of majesty and of mystery. The vastness and splendour of the sky, its purity and its repose, the awful silence in which its mighty lights revolve and advance, the sublime order with which they move, their unchangeable and unfailing sequences, and the influences of heat and light and vital force which are unceasingly rained from above into the cold and sterile womb of earth—these were singularly impressive phenomena to the first observers of them. They could not fail to call forth wonder, admiration, and the sense of dependence and insignificance—feelings all of them akin to worship. The heavens, by day and night, did tell for ever in human ears a marvellous story of the Divine and Everlasting One who fixed their order and guides their influence. Was it at all strange if puzzled and ignorant minds lost the Divinity in the contemplation of his grandest workmanship?

The influence of the heavenly bodies upon primitive religion told in two distinct directions.

In the first place, it was from them that men seem to have derived their earliest conceptions of order and of law. Originally, as we read in Genesis, God had set the lights in the firmament for this very end—"for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." By

regular alternations of light and dark, and by the stately revolution of the four seasons, He has bounded off human life with its activities. Each day is an epitome of man's lifetime itself. Each month, to a race of peasants, brings its characteristic employment. The order of the calendar is that by which all human affairs are ordered. Alike in war and the chase, in field-labour and seafaring, in domestic and in civil arrangements, men from the first found that the powers which prescribed their actions, and defined limits to their enterprises, and determined the degree of their success, were pre-eminently the powers of the sky. Further, these heavenly bodies are of all objects known to us the most exactly and invariably uniform. Events on earth are too complex to be easily calculable. They cannot be foretold with assurance. Not so with celestial movements. These obey exact law, move with mathematical precision, and admit (as early observers soon found) of being predicted with absolute certainty. Among physical changes, therefore, these had the clearest witness to bear to a "reign of law" in the sphere that rules, while it encompasses and includes, our mundane existence. The powers of the heavens are rigorous law-makers. They act with the certitude and the unchangeableness of destiny. Is there any wonder that before an order so majestic, so inviolable, swaying into harmony with itself the erratic movements of men, as well as the whole face of earth and ocean, primitive worshippers felt impelled to prostrate themselves?

But the celestial bodies were more than teachers of law. In this great lesson of inviolable order, the chief place is of course occupied by the sun. Now the sun

is as conspicuously the source of terrestrial life as he is of rule. It might be only matter of conjecture when the early founders of astrology ascribed to moon and planets also some vague influence upon men and beasts and plants. It was, at least no conjecture, but the most patent of facts, that the solar light and heat formed the condition of terrestrial existence. Great lord both of the day and of the year, the sun is the most powerful of all creatures, and seemed to them to dominate this lower earth like a god. Directly, he is the support of all vegetable life; indirectly, of animal life. As he grows feebler or more powerful, so wanes or waxes the stimulus to growth, germination, and vital productiveness upon earth. In his blaze all things kindle, all beauty is born. From his heat is nothing hid. Is he absent? Nature languishes and life expires. With his return, return fertility and gladness.

When these things are weighed, it cannot surprise any thoughtful mind that astronomical facts profoundly determined the primitive religion of men. It is not strange that both in East and West, among Shemites and Hamites, the venerable myths which lie embedded in our very speech, and have passed through every subsequent mythology of the world, should have been drawn from the dawn and the sunset, from the zodiac, the cycle of the seasons, and the mystery of the earth's annual renewal. It is not strange that everywhere the sun and the earth should reappear, symbolizing the active and passive principles in the production of telluric life.

Of the crass symbol-worship (idolatry, that is) to which this led, as men gradually dethroned the Maker

to erect into his room a thing He had made, I need here say nothing. Still less need is there to enlarge on the inexpressible pollution which crept into religion when to the deified powers of Nature men subordinated and prostituted their own purer moral instincts. What I wish to point out is the corrective which it pleased God to provide, in order that man might be delivered from this deification of the sidereal bodies, and from all abject dependence for his religious ideas upon physical phenomena. Such a corrective was supplied in the successive revelations made to Israel. When, from those stupendous systems of Nature-worship stretching from the Tigris to the Ægean, and everywhere crushing men's souls into an immoral, or even bestial, condition, we turn to the tiny strip of sacred soil which lay betwixt the Jordan and the Levant; when, in room of the pagan, we listen to the Hebrew, conception of nature, and catch what the God of revelation had disclosed to the prophets of his chosen people—what is it that we find? I take, for example, the Nineteenth Psalm, admitted to be of King David's own composition, as furnishing us with a trustworthy reply. And I find two things:—First, the truth which underlay these astronomical mythologies is discriminated from the error which had grown up around it; and thus the sidereal and solar heaven is restored to its true place in natural religion. Next, the two great lessons which (as we have seen) man had at first been reduced to learn from a material source, God has now imparted through a moral and spiritual revelation of Himself.

In the first place, the heavenly bodies are restored from a false to their true place as revealers of the Divine Nature.

♦

Revealers of God they unquestionably are. So far the primitive faiths of the pagan East started from a just postulate. God dwells in the midnight sky. God speaks in moon and solemn starlight. God operates through the mighty sun when at dawn he issues fresh as a bridegroom from the curtains of the east, and races westward with the strong tread of a hero to find his goal in the crimson splendours of the west. Neither the poetry nor the devotion which paganism drew from the vast and glorious sky is lost upon the Hebrew prophet. His spirit thrills with as reverent and melodious music to the touch of dawn or the magic of planets as ever the spirit of Chaldæan sage. But in this he had one clear advantage over his heathen contemporaries, that from these most divine of creatures, his faith sprang at one stupendous bound, past creature-dom altogether, to the Immaterial and Spiritual Being whose handiwork they are. Planets and stars—they are the dust of Jehovah's feet. Heaven's awful dome of blue—it is a tent Jehovah has pitched for the sun. That all-ruling sun itself—it is Jehovah's vassal, and goes forth at his bidding. Vaster than the vastest, inconceivably mightier than the mightiest, what else but Jehovah's glory is written across the midnight heaven, and sung in ceaseless hymns by day to day, or night to night? For to the fathers of the Hebrew race God had disclosed Himself as Jehovah—a personal Being—moral, spiritual, and eternal; and this sublimer truth emancipated them at a stroke—emancipated, at least, such as received it—from the fascinations of Nature-worship. To hold firm and clear this truth of the absolute contrast in kind betwixt Personal Maker and impersonal made; contrast of the Creator Spirit,

immaterial, invisible, immortal, to mere matter in its most gorgeous array : to hold that fast (I say), permits us with safety to praise the heavens as we please, and fill our soul with the wonders of astronomical, as of all other, science. For then the creature fulfils its rightful office—to extol or set off as a foil the glory of God. The more divine I find his handiwork to be, the lower do I fall in intelligent adoration before the Deity Himself. Whereas, whatever teaching tends to wipe out that vital interval in kind betwixt God and nature ; whatever suppresses the personal in God, or drapes the forces of dead matter in the attributes of divine life, so that it becomes hard to say whether God and his works are any longer two, or are really one—all *that* is teaching which runs perilously near to antique paganism, and which, if we give it scope, may land us again in the exploded idolatry of physical forces.

Nor, *in the next place*, is there any longer an excuse for such confounding of the Personal Ruler with the laws and forces of his own universe. If a Hebrew or a Christian fall into any similar error, he has no such excuse as may be pled for primitive star-gazers in old Chaldæa. Why ? Because we are no longer reduced to derive our knowledge of God mainly from the laws and changes of matter. In physical law and physical force God is revealed ; but, because the revelation was found to mislead, He has put another and a better by its side. The former was material ; this is moral. The former disclosed the stability and permanence of law in the movement of planets ; this is the regulation of character. The one revealed the forces that reproduce vegetable and animal life upon the globe ; this the

spiritual forces by which is sustained a religious life in man.

It is the praise of this moral and religious revelation of God which the Psalmist sings in the second portion of the Nineteenth Psalm. He calls it "the law of Jehovah"—the "Torah"—or body of instruction for practical direction of life which God has given us. He piles up the alternative names for it on which so many changes are rung in the Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm. It is God's "testimony" to his own character and will; his "statutes," or detailed precepts of duty; his "commandment," or central principle of morals; his "judgments," or the code of jurisprudence for society that is based upon these. By the use of so full a list of synonyms, we gather that what David means is substantially the entire revelation of God as made known to the Hebrew people of his time. That Hebrew revelation had assumed characteristically the shape of legislation, and accordingly the reverential observance paid to it by devout Hebrews was termed "the fear of Jehovah." But there is no reason why we, the heirs of all that David possessed, and of so much more beside, should not render his eulogy into modern Christian speech; since what was true of the Mosaic Law is still more true of the Gospel, the new "law of liberty." God's revelation of Himself in his Son has consummated what Moses began; and the blessings which King David loved to discover in his imperfect Bible are far more richly present for us in the finished testimony of Jesus and his apostles.

What we have to understand, then, is this: That to men who sit under the light of revelation, this new manifestation of the Divine glory in the Law and the

Gospel holds such a place of pre-eminence as was held in the old Nature-faiths of the world by the solar and sidereal heavens. *This* now declares the glory of God; *this* is his word, or "voice," heard through all the earth;¹ *this* now discovers to us that the Eternal rules the world by law, and teaches us by what vital force our higher life is nourished. It gives us moral, where before we had only physical, laws; and spiritual life-forces, where we could find none but natural.

First, as to the new revelation of Divine *Law*, let me say a word; then, of the new revelation of Divine *Life-Force*.

1. The new law is moral, a law not fixing the order in which masses of unconscious matter must move, but prescribing the order in which free will and conscious choice ought to move. It follows that this new law may be transgressed. In physics there is nothing analogous to sin; for the stars in their courses cannot fight against their Maker; they can only fight (if He so choose) against their Maker's enemies. Disobedience, lawlessness, crime, become only possible in the region of moral natures. They are the penalty we must pay for that noblest of all created things, a free obedience to duty. Still it is one and the same Being who guides the heavenly bodies by the law of gravitation, and who also strives to guide our wills on earth by the law of righteousness. Betwixt moral and physical law there holds, accordingly, a certain resemblance. Each is the condition of order within its proper sphere. Order is the condition of well-being, only to be obtained through subjection of the individual to the system; that is, through obedience to rule. This holds

¹ Cf. Rom. x. 18.

as rigorously in morals as in physics. No Eastern watcher of the sidereal movements ever saw his calculations defeated by some erratic or unruly star that rose at the wrong hour, invaded the orbit of its fellow, or carried desolation through forbidden regions. From the serene and unvarying harmony of their revolutions he found it possible to tabulate and predict their appearances, and to deduce the law of their existence. Who will predict or tabulate the actions of men? or who, from observing the behaviour of his fellows alone, could deduce the laws by which human life may be reduced to order? We learn the rules of duty as much by their "breach" as by their "observance." Yet one thing we surely know: through disobedience to this law has come into the world disorder, contention, rupture of ordained relationships, breach of the fair system God designed, a marring of all healthful action, and a swift rushing (so God hinder not) of the discordant elements back to chaos again. And this also we may depend on, that there is no road of return to harmony, peace, or happiness, possible to mankind save by reinstating in its rightful authority the moral law which God in his mercy has afresh proclaimed. For this reason the whole of revelation is a re-assertion of the dishonoured law of love and duty. The gospel of Christ, not less than the Mosaic economy, establishes a triumph for that broken law. It vindicates its unchangeableness. It discovers its awful sanctions. It proves how fearfully its breach must be avenged. It magnifies its perfect beauty and godlikeness. It designs its re-establishment over human hearts and wills as a regulator for man's inner life no less inviolable or absolute than the laws of the solar system. Its end

will be attained only when human life, eccentric no longer, shall circle round the throne of God in a steady, measured, and harmonious orbit of duty, yielding itself cheerfully to the moral attraction of the Divine love, and respecting the limitations imposed by Divine justice.

2. It is in the maintenance of this restored spiritual order that we are to realize spiritual life and gladness. In the solar arrangements, order comes first : given that as its condition, beneficence follows—fruit-bearing to the earth. So, in revelation, righteousness comes first : the righteousness of God revealed to faith, restoring the sinful soul to its true and just relation with God, and re-erecting over the rebellious heart the authority of Divine law. Then, and thereby, comes solar warmth to the spirit, and moral energy, and genuine joy. So, I think, the author of this Psalm perceived, who to each term of eulogy hung upon his beloved “law of Jehovah” has appended a note of admiration for the benefits it confers on the soul that observes it (Verses 7, 8). Is the law “perfect”? Then it refreshes or vivifies anew the spirit of man. Is it “sure”—faithful and abiding as the statutes of the sky? Thereby it teaches wisdom to erring and beguiled hearts. Or is it “right,” straight, that is, and true to the nature of God—its norm? Then it gives joy, for it satisfies the hunger of the soul after absolute righteousness. Or “pure” and transparent as the sunlight? Then it illumines the inward eye, and fills the man who loves it with cheerfulness and health.

Thus warmly could he praise the benefits of God's revelation to whom revelation was so meagre. With unveiled face Christians behold the glory of God in

Christ, as in a late-risen Sun of Righteousness. We know how the perfect law, magnified as well as vindicated in the Cross, has brought to the Christian world, along with perfect righteousness, pardon, and acquittal, a better daylight to the soul, a spring-tide of devout affection, a quickened love for duty, and a new fruitfulness in the service of humanity. If healthier moral impulses course in the veins of Christian men, if nobler desires fire their blood, if inward disorder has given place to harmony; if, in a word, moral winter be over and gone, and the time of the singing of birds be come—then indeed is God's glory to be seen, not alone, nor best, in the circling year or the heavens that rain sunshine on the soil. The old Nature-revelation has no glory now in comparison with this glory that excelleth. Far above the laws and forces of his own handiwork in material creation must be that God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who to our own moral nature has revealed Himself in the Scriptures as the righteous Father, and who quickeneth the heart of his earthly child into a moral beauty like his own.

J. OSWALD DYKES.

THE BIGOTRY OF ILLUMINATION.

ISAIAH lxvi: 5.

WE have but to place the parable of the "two men who went up to the temple to pray" side by side with this picturesque Verse, to see that it is one and the selfsame Spirit which speaks to us by the pen of Isaiah and the lips of our Lord. The words of Isaiah are simply an antique version of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

In his day, as in our Lord's, there were those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others ; Pharisees before the Pharisees, who were mainly occupied with the niceties and technicalities of ritual, who condemned their very brethren as unclean, and cried, "Stand off! we are holier than you!" And even in Isaiah's day there were Publicans as well as Pharisees—men of a humble and contrite spirit, who could not so much as look up to Heaven, but smote upon their breasts, saying, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteous deeds as filthy rags. Be not very angry, O Lord, neither remember our iniquity for ever." And just as the Lord Jesus, humbling the proud and exalting the humble, pronounced "this man justified rather than the other," so the Lord Jehovah affirms that He will appear to give joy to the contrite souls who trembled at his word, and to put to shame the painted hypocrites who hated them, and cast them out of the synagogue.

But we must try to form a more exact and complete conception of the two classes whom Isaiah depicts than even this parallel affords.

At the time of which the Prophet speaks, the Jews were captives in Babylon. Their captivity was drawing to a close. They were looking forward to times of peace, when, restored to their native land, they should not only build houses, but inhabit them, not only plant vineyards, but enjoy them ; when their cities should rise from their ruins, and the whole land become a fold for flocks.¹ The great body of the nation, then as always, took the days as they came, and seldom troubled themselves to reflect whether on the higher, or the

¹ Isaiah lxy. 8-10, 17-25.

future, aspects of their life. But there were two classes in the nation who were not content to drudge on day by day, who were compelled to look before and after. And, while they both devoted themselves above all to the religious aspects of human life, and sought to keep themselves in correspondence with Heaven, their reflections landed them in quite opposite conclusions.

By far the larger and more influential of these two classes gave themselves mainly to the speculative and the ceremonial elements of religion. They thought much and freely on the truths which lie at the basis of all religion; but they also thought much of ritual, or the mere outward and formal expression of religion. The Prophet tells us that, in the prospect of being restored to the land of their fathers, they were much exercised as to the kind of temple they should build for Jehovah, the sacrifices they were to offer Him, as to how and in what forms they should revive the splendid ritual of his house. And, remembering the stress laid on temple and sacrifice by Moses and the prophets, our first impression of these men is that they must have been the very salt of Israel, that the thoughts and intents of their hearts must have been singularly well-pleasing to God. Naturally, therefore, we are no little surprised to hear¹ God refusing any house they could build for Him, with anger and contempt, and denouncing their sacrifices, the very sacrifices ordained by Moses, as mere insults and crimes. "He that slayeth an ox killeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb strangeth a dog; he that offereth an oblation offereth swine's blood; he that burneth incense blesseth an idol." In any connection these words

¹ Isaiah lxvi. 1-3.

would be startling enough; but to find them in a Hebrew Scripture, addressed to Jews bent on honouring Jehovah by reviving the worship of his house, is enough to take away one's breath. What had these men done, into what fatal error had they fallen, that they should be thus roughly rebuked by Him of whom they said, "Let Jehovah be glorified"?

Their contact with the restless, inquisitive, and cultivated intellect of the Babylonians had led them to inquire and think more freely than their fathers had been wont to do. All that we include under the term "education" had become a passion with them during their captivity. They were wild for that "knowledge" which they saw to be "power." But this could be no offence to the God of all wisdom. Nor, I think, can *the bitterness* of his wrath against them be explained either by their adoption of certain Babylonian methods of inquiry into the secrets of the spiritual world, or even by their having partially yielded to the vast and constant pressure of the idolatrous influences by which they were surrounded. It *was* an offence against God, it did "provoke" Him, that they should "sacrifice in the gardens" of the Babylonian temples, and "burn incense on the tiles," or bricks, for the fabrication of which the Babylonians are celebrated to this day, and of which they built their altars. It did seem to Him that they "walked in a way which was not good" when they "sat among the graves" to hold intercourse with the dead, and "spent the night in crypts," where they were initiated in the secret mysteries of heathen philosophy; when they did not scruple to eat that which his law denounced as unclean at idolatrous feasts. It could not but move Him to resentment,

when, forsaking Him and forgetting his holy mountain, they "prepared a table for Fortune, and filled a libation to Destiny." In so far as they fell into these sins, they could not but incur the anger of God.¹

But we must remember that, according to the whole testimony of ancient history, the Jews did not as a people yield to the idolatry of their captors; that, in their captivity, they grew so sick of the dark and cruel worship of idols, as that they have never since lapsed into that sin, prone to it as they had been before. We must also remember that those of them who were initiated into the mysteries of the Babylonian schools and temples may have been, and probably were, sincere seekers after knowledge. Struck and impressed by the superior civilization of their captors, they gave themselves to search out its secret sources, with a view of appropriating whatever they found good in it, and of reproducing it in Hebrew forms. There was no sin in that. Moses had learned much of his wisdom in Egypt. Even the law that came by Moses bears abundant traces of having come to him through an Egyptian mould; while the temple and its services, the priesthood and its vestments, were confessedly framed on Egyptian models. And if Moses might learn from Egypt, why might not these subsequent leaders of Hebrew thought learn from Babylon? That which was a virtue in him could hardly be a sin in them. Yet, despite the goodness of their intention, and in part, apparently, *because* of their intention to modify and enlarge the Mosaic ritual by the Babylonian wisdom, God rejects their temple and worship with the utmost abhorrence: nay, He denounces them with a

¹ Isaiah lxx. 3, 4, II.

bitter contempt, for which, as yet, we cannot fully account.

If we would account for it, we must not only take note of their deference to the Babylonian wisdom, we must also observe that these men had fallen into the very sin most offensive to Heaven—hating men to prove their love for God. Puffed up by a sense of their superior wisdom, they affected a singular and unapproachable holiness. *They* had been initiated into sacred and secret mysteries; *they* had held converse with the spirits of the dead; they had been admitted to the most interior and solemn acts of the Babylonian worship; they were purposing to modify and reform the Mosaic law and ritual: and on all these grounds they claimed a sanctity special and peculiar to themselves. *They* were not of the common strain. They were not as other men were, but high above them. They posed themselves as on a pedestal, and, gathering their immaculate robes about them, they cried to their brethren, “Stand off! we are holier than you!” Chosen and set apart, as they conceived, by special revelations and superior sanctity, they even “hated” their brethren, and “thrust them out,” *i.e.*, excommunicated them from their fellowship. Nay, worse still, and the crowning sin of all, they made God Himself a partaker in their sins—hating their brethren *for his Name's sake*, and thrusting them out *that He might be glorified!*

Now, there is no sin against the Divine Love so offensive as this, none which so deeply moves the Divine resentment. In the Old Testament Scriptures we see a God who is merciful and gracious, easy to be entreated for any sin committed simply against Him-

self, but who flames into fierce anger so soon as man sins against man. In the Scriptures of the New Testament we see that the God manifest in the flesh is even ready to make excuse for his disciples when they are simply lacking in the sympathy or the loyalty due to Him, but that He turns upon them with his severest rebukes the moment they attempt to keep the little ones, the humble and despised, from Him, or to "forbid" those who do not "follow with them." And when men not only sin against men, but *hate* them, and not only hate them, but hate them *for God's sake*; not only cut them off from their sympathy and fellowship, but cut them off *for the glory of God*: when they not only commit the sin most offensive to Him, but commit it under cover of zeal for his service, we can well understand—and we of the Church need especially to lay this fact to heart—that his anger against them should be fierce, and bitter, and well-nigh implacable. They cannot love the Father whom they have not seen, unless they love the brothers whom they have seen; and therefore they reach the very climax of iniquity and hypocrisy when they hate their brethren out of love to God.

There is a bigotry of Ignorance; but there is also a more deadly bigotry of Illumination: and it is these illuminated bigots, boasting themselves of their larger wisdom and superior sanctity, who constitute one of the classes—what we may call the *Pharisee* class—placed before us by the Prophet. The other class—which we may designate the *Publican* class—are characterized by a single phrase: they "*tremble at the word*" of God. But this phrase is expanded in the second verse of the Chapter: "On this man will I

look—*on him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word.*”

The second, the excommunicated class, then, consists of “the faithful remnant” of Israel. Hated by their brethren, they are loved by God; cut off from the Church, they nevertheless compose the true Church. And they are described as men who above all seek to acquaint themselves with the Divine Will. Perceiving that they have opposed that Will, that the word of God condemns their personal and national sins, they are filled with a humble contrition for their sins, a holy fear of the Word that condemns them. Unlike their illuminated brethren, they have no conceit of a superior holiness; they do not account themselves as in any sense holy, but as sinful and unclean. The prayer recorded in Chapters lxiii. and lxiv. is *their* prayer, and in this prayer we may hear the breathings of their humble and contrite spirit. They know how their brethren regard them, that they have been thrust out of the Jewish fellowship. They admit, “Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel will not acknowledge us.” But, instead of being inflamed with resentment, and retorting scorn with scorn, they are moved to supplication and confession. “God,” they say, “in Himself so good and kind, is angry with us. Then we must have sinned. Had we continued in his ways, we had been saved.” And then they fall to the most pathetic and exhaustive confession of sin. “We, all of us, became as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness as filthy rags. There was none that called on thy Name, that stirred himself up to cleave to Thee. Therefore hast Thou hid thy face from us, and made us to melt away in the hand of our iniquities.” Confession rises into the

most plaintive and piercing entreaty. "Yet now, O Lord, Thou art our Father. We are the clay, and Thou our Maker. We are all of us the work of thy hands. Be not very angry, O Lord, neither remember our iniquity for ever. Behold, consider, we beseech Thee; we are all of us thy people!"¹ Where shall we find words more pathetic and imploring than these, or words which more fitly express the humble and contrite spirit that trembles at God's word? As we listen to them we feel that they flow up through the rifts of a broken heart. The men who utter this confession and prayer stand at the very farthest remove from the proud affectation of superior sanctity which breathes in the words of their brethren who hated them: "Stand off! we are holier than you; you, who are not holy at all!" In the one class, we have the haughtiest assumption of holiness; in the other, the profoundest consciousness of sin.

There is another point of contrast between them. The men who claimed a superior illumination and sanctity "*hated*" their brethren and cast them off. But these humble spirits will not repay hate with hate. They love and pray for the very men who hate and ban them. Abraham may be ignorant of them; Israel may not acknowledge them; but they will not separate themselves from any who bear those honoured names. In their prayer, rich in the deepest pathos, there is perhaps no more pathetic touch than this,—that no less than four times within its narrow compass we find the words *all of us*. "*We, all of us*, became as an unclean thing; *We, all of us*, faded like the leaves; *We are, all of us*, the work of thy hand; *We are*,

¹ Isaiah lxiii. 16; lxiv. 5-9.

all of us, thy people." With a love that absorbs and transcends all hate, they *will* pray for, they *will* associate themselves with, those who have banned them and cast them from them. They cannot confess their own sins without also confessing the sins of their judges and censors; they cannot ask the Divine mercy for themselves without asking it also for the very men who have shewn no mercy to them.

So that the contrast between these two classes is radical and complete. The one is characterized by a towering spiritual pride and an utter lack of charity; the other, by humility and love. The latter class, the men of a humble and contrite spirit, may not be so wise as their brethren who hate them; they may not be so zealous for modes of worship as those who thrust them out; "the glory of God" may not be so often on their lips. They may be outcasts from the commonwealth and lie under the ban of the Church—as our English fathers did for many a day. But, because they love their very enemies; because they bless those that curse them, and pray for those who despitefully use them, the ultimate victory lies with them. When God appears, it is they who will rejoice and be glad: it is their self-righteous self-complacent brethren who will be put to shame.

This is the Divine judgment on the judges and the judged. It is given briefly and dramatically in the passage before us: Hear ye the word of Jehovah, ye that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hate you and thrust you out for my Name's sake have said, Let Jehovah be glorified! But He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. This is the verdict of God, and it is difficult to say which of the two classes would

be the more astonished by it. Doubtless the Pharisaic *illuminati*, the men who trusted in themselves and despised others, who looked down on their brethren from their lofty pedestal with the fine scorn of a more liberal creed and a more æsthetic ritual, would be amazed and confounded to hear that they were less acceptable to God than the very men whom they hated and banned; nay, that they were rejected by Him. But even they, I think, could hardly be so astonished as the poor and contrite spirits who had meekly submitted to their scorn. *These*, surely, could hardly have believed for joy and wonder as the Word, at which they had been wont to tremble, declared them to be the true servants of Jehovah, and warned their haughty self-complacent judges: "Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall famish! Behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall thirst! Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed! Behold, my servants shall shout for gladness of heart, but ye shall cry out for sorrow of heart; ye shall wail for anguish of spirit: and ye—ye who have cursed so many—shall leave your name for a curse to my chosen ones! *You* build me a temple! Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool. What house can *ye* build for me, and how can ye make ready a place in which I will rest? *You* offer me a sacrifice! He of you that slayeth an ox killeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb stranglenth a dog. Your very worship is offensive and abominable to me as an unclean offering or a public crime."¹

Such a verdict as this must have been a terrible blow to men who had put on the airs of favourites of Heaven, and had despised their simple and unlettered

¹ Isaiah lxy. 13-15; lxvi. 1-3.

brethren. And it may very well be that, in the fact that the prophets were constantly bringing them such verdicts as these, we have the explanation of a point which has much perplexed historians and commentators. The difficulty has been to account for the historical fact that only a few of the children of Israel cared to return from Babylon to Judæa, and that, of the few thousands who came back from the Captivity, hardly any appear to have been men of learning and wealth and influence. But if the Jews who had acquainted themselves with the wisdom of Babylon, and acquired opulence or influence in the land of their captivity, found themselves constantly passed over by God, and the preference given to men of a humble and contrite spirit; if the Voice of Inspiration met their claims with contempt, and denounced their very wisdom and sanctity and zeal as new offences against Jehovah, we can easily understand that they would not be eager to adventure their all in his service. Why should they care to make great sacrifices and brave great dangers in order to serve a God who threatened them with his anger, to build up a social and religious state in which their special gifts would be of no value, in which they could win no honour, for which they were condemned beforehand as unfit? If Jehovah cared only for the humble and contrite souls who trembled at his word, and with whom they had refused to associate, let Him have them: but why should *they* abandon their studies, their high position, their reputation and emoluments, to serve Him? If they came to the conclusion that it was not worth their while to link their fate to that of the poor and scanty bands led back to Jerusalem by Zerubbabel and Ezra, but resolved to

stay in the great busy world in which they had acquired place and consequence, we need not, I think, be very much surprised.

The great lesson of this passage is a lesson very pertinent to the present time. There is a bigotry of Illumination as well as a bigotry of Ignorance, a bigotry of Breadth as well as a bigotry of Narrowness. Against the latter most of us who write and read this Magazine are, perhaps, on our guard. Sectarianism is not attractive to us. The man who can see nothing good beyond the limits of his own fellowship, of his own branch of the universal Church, has been sufficiently stigmatized to make us resent any comparison of ourselves with him. The man who prays thus with himself, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, nor even as this Episcopalian, this Presbyterian, this Baptist," is not likely, we admit, to go down to his house justified; and we may therefore strive, with more or less success—not often with complete success, I fear—against the spirit of his prayer. But are we sufficiently on our guard against another, and a still more fatal, temper? Our very breadth and liberality of thought may bring us under the Prophet's censure by another road. The Jews condemned by Isaiah were those who had most freely acquainted themselves with all the wisdom of Babylon, and were most willing to modify both their creed and their worship, so as to adapt it to their larger outlook. It was in the full pride of their superior wisdom and more reasonable service that they separated themselves from their brethren, and thrust them out from all community of thought and fellowship of spirit. And, in like manner, we may have yielded to the spirit of our age;

we may have suffered our thoughts to widen with the years ; our creed may be broader ; we may breathe a more large and kindly air than of old. And we may be so conscious of the advance we have made, as to have lost, in some measure, the humble and contrite spirit to which God manifests Himself in love. We may look, with the fine scorn of superior intelligence, or more cultivated taste, or what we mistake for "a larger charity," on men who still stand where we ourselves once stood, and hold the views we once held. Some touches of this superfine scorn may be seen, I think, in our schools of science, of literature, and of art. And we can hardly hope that no trace of it is to be found in the Church—in *ourselves*. For some of us, at least, it must be very hard to maintain terms of sincere brotherly communion with those who, as we deem, are less advanced than ourselves ; we may even hate a bigot with perfect bigotry ; to our Publicans—*Philistines* we sometimes call them—we may be tempted to exclaim, "Stand off! I am of a more refined intelligence and a broader heart than you." We may even suffer this evil spirit to taint our worship, and our prayer may run, "God, we thank Thee that we are not as other men are—Romanists, Ritualists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, nor even as this Methodist. We have done with sectarianism, and keep no terms with it." Forgetting that, if we have any higher wisdom than others, it is that we may teach them what God has taught us ; forgetting that, if we have any greater strength, it is that we may bear the infirmities of the weak ; forgetting that, if our charity be of a purer and broader strain, it is that we may love more men and love them more

purely ; we also, in God's name and all with a view to his glory, may separate ourselves from brethren who, though they are ignorant and narrow and suspicious, may nevertheless tremble at the word of God, and heartily long to know and do his will. *O hear the word of the Lord, ye that sin against the spirit of the Lord, by despising any of your fellows, however ignorant and weak they may be. If ye hate your brethren, and thrust them out for his Name's sake, saying, Let Jehovah be glorified ! He shall appear to their joy, and ye shall be ashamed.*

EDITOR.

THE SECOND ADVENT.

ST. MATTHEW XXV. 5.

If it be true that belief in the ministry of angels has to a great extent faded out of our modern Christianity, and if (as I have tried to shew in a former paper) an account can be given of that change which is quite consistent with a very deep and earnest faith, I believe that we may turn to another and even more important article of historical Christianity with something of the like feeling and of the like hope. And, surely, it is not necessary again to argue that it is well for us to face every change of this kind with the utmost honesty. To fling away any article of one's creed, or to hold it as an open question, just because doubts arise concerning it in the minds of others or in one's own, is a rashness and a folly. But when there has been a slow but very general fading away of beliefs, of feelings, or of expectations, which once were part and parcel of ordinary Christian faith, it is our obvious duty to look the matter in the face, and get, if possible, to the bottom of it.

We cannot afford to repeat creeds which we do not really believe; to retain among our religious stores long rows of empty jars of which the once fragrant contents have long since evaporated.

The subject of which I wish to treat is the Second Coming of Christ; or, rather, it is the *expectation* of that Second Coming. And there are, I think, three points which may be laid down without dispute as raising the problem we have to consider.

1. It was decidedly and emphatically a part of the teaching of Christ that He should come again. This is the least that can be said of it: it would be almost true that He made it the most prominent point of his teaching, and used his utmost power, both in direct statement and in parable, to fix the minds of his hearers on this above all other things. No "destructive criticism" can eliminate this element from the Gospels without utterly destroying their tissue; and, even if it were eliminated from the Gospels, it would be a second impossibility to extinguish its echoes and re-echoes from the Acts and the Epistles.

Some have had the hardihood to maintain that the expectation of the Second Advent was due to fraudulent devices of interested teachers, who held the people thereby in bondage—*how*, it is not easy to see. A theory so absolutely gratuitous is beneath contempt. All sane people will agree that, if our Lord is *not* coming again with glory, He was either a deceiver or deceived.

2. The expectation of the Second Advent was a very lively and prominent part of the faith of the early Christians. The earliest and least contested of the Epistles bear the strongest testimony to this fact.

That St. Paul, e.g., preached the doctrine very forcibly at Thessalonica is abundantly evident from his Epistles addressed to the converts there. So strong was the impression made on them, that they neglected their business, and could scarcely think of anything else: they even took for granted that it would come to pass in their own lifetime. The other Epistles do not point to anything so extreme, but they all put forward the appearing of Christ as a matter of real and constant expectation.

3. The expectation of the Second Advent has altogether ceased to have any practical place among the feelings, motives, or anticipations which govern the Christian life. I say this with perfect confidence, and with the utmost broadness of statement. It is true of *all* Christian bodies, without distinction. It is part of a universal change which has been coming over our religion since the Apostles fell asleep, but especially since the birth of Science. I know that there is an *appearance* of really expecting the Day, of saying that the Judge is at the door. When the season of Advent comes round many thousands of preachers all over the world will exhort their congregations to be waiting and watching for that second coming of Christ "as a thief in the night." But neither preachers nor congregations will do anything of the sort. If they are good Christians they will be living in daily view of, and preparation for, their *own* departure; but the Second Coming of Christ will remain (as it has been for centuries) too utterly divorced from considerations of time to have any practical awakening effect.

There is a body of Christians who did really begin, not many years ago, by preaching and believing the

speedy—in fact, the immediate—coming of Christ. They preach it still; but I venture to say, without for a moment questioning their honesty, that they do not continue to believe it. What I mean is, that their belief in this speedy coming is only a dogma, an accepted article of their creed; it is not, nor can be, an actual expectation. To maintain *that* in very truth, it had been necessary for them to sever themselves from the business, the fashion, the pleasure, the daily life, of modern society—which they have not done.

The fact is—and it is a psychological fact which holds true of men of all creeds and all temperaments—that there are only two ways in which a belief in the Second Advent can dwell in the human mind. It may be a real expectation; and then it must produce a certain amount of excitement, of speculation, of impatience, of “detachment” from the concerns of this world, as it did among the early Christians. Or, on the other hand, it may be a merely formal belief without expectation, as it is now. We think of the Second Advent as belonging to the absolutely vague and shadowy future. We have quite ceased to speculate when it will be, with the exception of a few to whom such speculation is a matter of intellectual enjoyment. We have removed the subject from practical contemplation. With human nature constituted as it is, it could not possibly be otherwise. The mind of man cannot be kept upon the strain of expectation for more than a very limited time; and this holds true of a body of people quite as much as of an individual. No emotion more quickly exhausts itself and expires through sheer inability to maintain itself at its first level. It is, *e.g.*, perfectly well known that those who live in earth-

quake-haunted countries never trouble themselves about the earthquake until it comes. They take such ordinary precautions as experience has taught them, but that is all. This is sometimes ascribed to a frivolous disposition; but, in truth, we ourselves should do just the same. If we were *sure* that the earthquake would come within a year, or a few years, we *might* expect it all the while; but if it were utterly uncertain when it would come, or whether it would come in our time at all, we simply *would* not keep alive the expectation of it in our minds. And so it is with the Second Advent. I doubt whether there is a single person who is really watching for it day by day. By far the greater number of ordinarily good people never seriously think of it at all; the end on which the eyes of their soul are fixed being their own departure, not *his* coming. And those of us who think, and strive to understand as much as we can of the ways of God, are for the most part persuaded that the world has a long, perhaps an enormously long, lease of existence before her yet. This, however, is a fresh element in the question—a positive element of expectation telling directly against the weakened expectation of which I have been speaking—and it requires separate consideration.

No one will doubt that modern life is actually founded throughout upon the tacit assumption that the present world will last; and few would deny that the assumption is reasonable. Everything in the past, especially as interpreted by geology and astronomy, points to the working out of God's plans and purposes through immense intervals of time. Everything in the present, so imperfect, unfinished, confused, and yet hopeful and pointing clearly to higher and better developments in

the future, seems to demand immense intervals of time to work itself fairly out to its legitimate consummation. Science, and scientific discovery, and scientific control of the forces of nature, are so amazing, on the whole so clearly benevolent and so certainly intended for us by the goodness of God, and yet are so obviously in their infancy still, that we cannot believe that the Most High would suddenly put a term to all human progress under present conditions. If so, why and wherefore did He permit the era of discovery and of conquest over nature to commence?

For we must never forget that this "benevolence"—this hopeful aspect of the life of the race—which inevitably leads to such eager forecastings and discountings of the next century and of the further future, is strictly modern: it is hardly, if at all, more than three centuries old. And it is not (we must honestly confess) due to Christianity. It is probable that Christianity, on the whole, augmented the misery of man, and the wretchedness of his sojourn here, for ten centuries at least: not, of course, by making the hard conditions of life harder; but by multiplying and intensifying the susceptibilities of men to suffering. Compare, *e. g.*, the capacity of mental torment of a Christian maiden, or a Christian father, with that of non-Christians. No one doubts that heathen and Mahometan men and women may suffer acutely; but no one with any Christian feeling can well doubt that Christians may suffer more acutely in exact proportion to the depth and refinement of their Christian character. The very "gentleness of Christ," as reflected in his followers, becomes a source of poignant anguish to them in an ungentle world. And Christianity, while

it increased susceptibility to pain, did not diminish the amount of pain to be endured. Life under the heathen Roman Empire was a most wretched thing, and without hope of improvement. No one in his senses could have desired God to prolong the days of that decaying and degraded State. Yet its fall was worse than its continuance — a chaos of barbarian hordes, either heathen, or owning a nominal Christianity: who could desire that mankind should be perpetuated under such circumstances? And even when the seething chaos settled into some kind of order, and some sort of right grew out of stark unblushing might, yet was it no such world as even we, with our largely "modified" Christianity, could have endured to live in. The gentle and the holy shrunk into monastic houses, and left the world to brawlers and ruffians, liars and seducers. We say they did wrong; we say they should have leavened the world by their example in the world. It is, however, obvious that it is a question of degree. There is a degree of violence, of lewdness, and of injustice, which one would be justified in not daring to face oneself; which one would be more than justified in not permitting one's children to face, if it were possible to avoid it. It was not heroic for men and women who sought the kingdom of God to retire into monasteries, and so to escape the dreadful trials and temptations of the outer world; but it was very natural and very excusable.

No, it was not Christianity, but that complex entity, Civilization — which has so many points of contact with Christianity, which gives and takes to and from it so freely, yet is so plainly diverse from it and independent of it — that has made this world the com-

paratively eligible home it is for the human race. Civilization, and its handmaid Science, have completely altered both the wishes and the expectations of mankind as to the duration of the world. Human life, looked at in the mass, and apart from the future fortunes of the individual, is raised to a level unspeakably higher than any one could have conceived three or four centuries ago. It is perfectly true that no common interests, no common triumphs, will ever compensate in the slightest degree for the failure of individual hope, or afford the least consolation when the shadow of death draws near; but it is also true that those common interests and common triumphs do exist on a grand and ever-growing scale, and that they must very largely affect the feelings and expectations of a Christian man. It is, I think, impossible to believe that the promise of the present, so rich, so manifold, so full of hope, should not be allowed time to realize itself. Surely there is a revelation of God in the history of Science, as well as in the facts of Nature! If those marvellous and beneficent powers and possibilities lay hid so many centuries; if now they are being so rapidly discovered and subdued to the service of man; we must surely argue that God not only meant them to be searched out (as we see) by man's keen intellect and patient inquiry, but also meant them to be used and improved for the benefit of the race through long tracts of time. For length of time is a necessity of Science for the future as well as for the past. No one would be content to think that Science, as applied to the advancement of the race and improvement of life, was in any later or less hopeful stage than that of vigorous youth with a practically unlimited career

before it. If the All-Father suffered his children to live in nakedness upon a storm-swept earth so many centuries, shall He cut short their dwelling when at last the wilderness has begun in part to blossom as the rose? We cannot but think of God in his relation to the human race as a whole, as well as in his relation to our individual souls.

These considerations will suffice to explain the fact that a positive expectation of the endurance of the present world has insensibly grown up in the mind of (perhaps) all thoughtful Christian people. Such an expectation is, of course, incompatible with a positive expectation of the Second Advent. As long as men did daily expect the end of all things, they could not possibly take any interest in the slow improvement of mundane existence. But, as I have shewn, the expectation of the Second Advent was one which, in the nature of things, could not last; delay was fatal to it as an active expectation, because the mind of man is constitutionally incapable of maintaining an active expectation for any length of time. The *belief* was not destroyed, because belief in a future event may exist quite apart from any considerations of time. It is quite easy to expect that the world will endure through ages of ages, perhaps beyond the arithmetic of man, and at the same time to believe that Christ will certainly come again, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God.

And now I would point out what I take to be a distinct intimation from our Lord's own lips of this universal failure of expectation of the Second Advent, which at first sight seems so singular. If He foretold it, there can be nothing in it which need stagger our

faith. The saying to which I refer forms part of the Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Need it be premised that that parable speaks to us, not of those vowed to a virgin life (as most¹ of the ancient commentators imagined), but of all professing Christians, all who are "called" to the marriage supper of the Lamb, whether "chosen" or not. Half of them were foolish, for they took, indeed, their lamps—their outward profession of holiness—and had no doubt some little oil of grace to start with; but they did not seek, and therefore did not receive, any abiding supply of the Holy Spirit, as did the others who were wise. But although there was this great and distinctive and (in its consequences) vital difference between them, yet, "while the bridegroom tarried, they *all* slumbered and slept"—the wise just as much as the foolish. Now, this has greatly puzzled the commentators, for it seems to be inconsistent with the character of the wise virgins: they did not expect to find *them* sleeping at such a time, when so much depended upon their being prepared. Many of them have therefore taken this sleep to be the sleep of death, which befalls all men, and reduces them to an apparent equality of unconsciousness. This, however, is inconsistent with the words used, with the scope of the parable, and with other Scriptures. "Sleep" is, indeed, often used in the sense of death, but not "slumber;" for the latter word denotes that drowsiness and nodding of the head which precedes actual, not metaphorical, sleep. Again,

¹ As far as I know, only Origen, with that deep, true, spiritual insight, which shines through all his eccentricities of speculation; and Jerome, with that strong common sense and scriptural learning which so generally kept his fanaticism in check, rise to the wider view which all modern commentators have long ago adopted.

death has no place in this parable at all, any more than it has in any of the eschatological discourses with which it is connected. Not death, but judgment, is the point to which the eye of faith is directed ; and to introduce a reference to death is to violate the simplest law of interpretation—the unity of the point of view. Again, to say that *all* Christians sleep in the sense of dying, is flatly to contradict St. Paul, who says that “ we shall *not* all sleep ; ” and the Creed, which asserts that Christ will come again to “ judge the *quick* and the dead.”

Clearly then, to my mind at least, the reference is to the universal failure of active expectation of the Second Advent among all Christians, good and bad. The bridegroom tarried ; his return was delayed far beyond the expectation of those who had to wait for his approach. And who does not know how suddenly and imperiously an excited expectation, after long delay, turns to drowsiness and sleep ? One may see it exemplified in the most striking way in the case of a little child, but it holds true of us all. Neither mind nor body can stand the strain of eager expectation for long together ; sleep comes as a tyrant who may not be gainsaid, albeit a beneficent tyrant on the whole. This was why those wise virgins also slumbered and slept ; and no one need blame them. Their lamps burnt on, well filled with oil, and ready to be turned up at any moment : they would not be any the less ready to meet the bridegroom when he *did* come, because they slumbered while he tarried.

It is the same with us. We are not expecting the Bridegroom ; it would be hypocrisy to say that we are. Consciously, or unconsciously, we think, we act, we

speculate, we forecast, we live as citizens of this world, on the tacit assumption that the world is going on, and will go on. We are all asleep; and we are asleep because He has tarried so long, so much longer than there was any reason to expect. When we were told to go forth to meet Him, He spoke as if He were coming again almost immediately, but it has not proved to be so; and since He has delayed thus long, it is impossible even to guess how much longer it may be. We cannot keep our minds on the strain, our expectations on the stretch: what we *can* do, is to have our lamps burning and filled with oil, so as to be ready at any moment when they may be wanted.

Such may surely be the legitimate attitude of a faithful soul with regard to the Second Advent. It is an attitude singularly liable to misconception, because it is one of slumber. To any person who did not understand, or did not make allowance for, the unalterable facts of our mental nature, and the inevitable and quite innocent consequences of those facts, this attitude of slumber would suggest only sloth, unconcern, or unbelief. Such, no doubt, is what suggests itself to the mind of an unbeliever, when he sees professing Christians quite as much as infidels entirely unexpectant of the end of all things. But the suggestion is wholly superficial and false. It is true that they are not living in view of Christ's coming, but they are living in view of their own departure. It is true they are not in a state of expectation, but they are in a state of preparedness. There is neither harm nor danger in their slumber, so long as their lamps are replenished with oil: the fear is, not lest they should fail to be awakened

then, but lest they should have failed to supply their lamps now.

It remains to account, if we can, for the language of our Lord, who certainly gave men the *impression* that his return would be very speedy.

It might be lawful, though it would be perilous, to assert that He did not Himself know, save in a general way; and that his tender solicitude for "his own" caused Him to hurry over in thought and word the period of his absence from them. Certainly He distinctly stated that He did not know the exact time of his return. Still, the fact remains that the first Christians were permitted to draw from our Lord's words the natural inference that his coming again was very near.

I make bold to say that the mistake, if such it can be called, was both natural and beneficent. Natural, because when dear friends part, they instinctively dwell not on the interval of separation, but upon the hour of reunion. It is always possible to regard a vague stretch of time as either long or short, and on such occasions we wish to regard it, and we do regard it, in its shortness, not in its length—in the shortness it will have when it is past, not in the length it will have while it is present. I should not be afraid to think that this natural instinct of love and tenderness coloured both the words of Christ and the impressions of the disciples.

Beneficent, again, was the expectation, in those days, of the speedy end of all things. Had the disciples been plainly told *then*, when human life was so painful and liable to such exquisite torments, that the

world would last so many, many, centuries—how much more dreadful it would have been, how much more hard to reconcile with the love and justice of God! They could not foresee the infinite improvement of the world, as a habitation for the human race, which God had in store. They only knew it was devoured by cruel tyrants, and defiled by unbridled lusts; and that the very most they could do by the grace of God, was to endure to the end, and so be saved. To prolong such a state of things seemed sheer cruelty, and to change it did not seem to be within the counsels of God. How beneficently, then, came to the help of their patience the ardent expectation of the speedy coming of Him who should restore all things!

We have only, then, to say about the prophecies of the Second Advent what we have to say about so much of the Old Testament—that time was a necessary element in their interpretation. To each age they yielded up a meaning, and always a beneficent meaning, but not to each age exactly the same meaning. God's revelation of Himself in history has modified, not his revelation of Himself in Scripture, but our understanding of it. But it must not be supposed that the earlier understanding, because superseded, was therefore false. It lacked *some* elements of truth, but it was actually more beneficent for those days than if it had possessed them. An active expectation of the Second Advent was possible, and was useful, to the early Christians: it is impossible, and it would be mischievous, to us.

RAYNER WINTERBOTHAM.

THE HOLY GHOST AS DOVE AND FIRE.

ST. MATTHEW iii. 11, 16.

IN the first of these sentences we are shewn the action of the mystic Divine Breath upon the people, coming to them, as it should come, through Christ ; the aspect it would assume, the way in which it would conduct and exhibit itself, when imparted to them from Him. The second sentence describes the dealing of the same Divine Breath with the Christ Himself—its manner of proceeding and working in his case.

In the people, the presence and operation of the Holy Ghost, which He was destined to communicate, would be a baptism of fire ; in Him it was a dove-like brooding. It touched and entered the sphere of his soul, a gently nourishing, fostering, ripening influence ; but, in passing from Him to them, it would become quite another thing. Once touching and entering them, it would be found a fiercely disturbing and devouring element. They could not have it as He had it ; it could not be with them as it was with Him. *His* “dove” must needs be *their* “fire.”

One is reminded of the difference between some new grand idea, or principle, in the mind of the originating thinker, and the same sent out by him among the multitude. It has visited *him* like sweet daybreak, like softly-streaming morning light, for which he had been waiting with upturned face and wistful eyes ; or it has

grown up within him by degrees, quietly, perhaps almost imperceptibly, like a plant under successive dews and nurturing airs, like grain of the field—"first the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear." Out of many secret thoughts and questionings, and many patient tarryings, it has unfolded to him. He is suddenly, or gradually, possessed with it. It captures him in peace, without noise or striving. But so soon as it goes forth from him, accosting and arresting men here and there, it begins to be a source of storms: around it gather hot angry controversies, and oppositions of prejudice. It creates conflict and division, "setting a man at variance against his father," and filling hitherto tranquil households with agitations of dispute. All is unrest and tumult; and only through prolonged severe struggle with old notions, and traditions that strenuously resist its progress, and are slow, very slow, to succumb and die—only thus is it at length accepted, and established in the general mind. Not a few are the ideas which, silently begotten, and silently deepening and fructifying for awhile in lonely breasts, have gone out into the crowd, to make much uproar, and inflame exceedingly.

The Spirit that descended on Jesus like a dove was to become, and became, when breathed abroad by Him, a consuming fire.

Strangely different the action of the same thing in contact with different substances or natures! What the sun shall be, in its energy and effect, depends on what the sun shall find. If, in the garden, it open waiting buds or sleeping flowers, and draw forth from them locked-up treasures of loveliness and grateful perfume; smiting the clay-clods, it does but bake them into

stiffer drearier hardness, or, shining on the refuse-heap in hidden corners, exhale a reek of foul and noisome stench. "What is one man's meat is another man's poison." We take the same article of food; but the individual organisms render its action antecedently uncertain, and produce, in the event, more or less diversity of effect. That which, in one, quietly and pleasantly nourishes, in another, deranges and defiles. We take the same medical drug; but the issue varies according to idiosyncrasy, which physicians in their treatment have always to allow for. The sleeping-draught, so called, has its character and quality determined by the system into which it passes. If in some cases it induces slumber, in others it may serve to fever and excite.

It is thus, too, in spirituals. The same scenes and incidents, the same environments, how dissimilarly they tell! When do any two persons receive precisely the same impression from a presentation of the same facts or ideas? What object, or subject, is there which, set before many minds, will yield a common mental result? What we shall greet in aught that approaches, depends upon whence we have come. The brightness, or dimness, of the candle of the Lord is in our own atmosphere. It is nothing that the heavens are opening above, until we know what eyes are open below. As are the eyes so will be the sheen, the glory and power of the revelation, and so will the secrets be moved. When God lays his hand upon us, it is *we* who decide what our experience of it shall be.

But, now, what meant the difference which is portrayed for us in these two Verses, between Christ and the people in their several receptions of the Holy Ghost? Why, in its descent upon *Him*, was it the gentle

brooding of a dove? in its effusion upon *them*, the burning of a fire? In other words, why did it simply rest in Him, embracingly, with tender cherishings and succourings? and, in them, vex and afflict with painful searchings and consumptions?

May we not answer with a word, that in Him it encountered no sinful force, no mass of evil passion or unworthy disposition, to contend with; but only beautiful germs to develope, only right sympathies and aspirations to encourage, and direct, and intensify? Yes; it found in Him only that which was accordant and congenial; the Holy Child to be nursed and expanded into the Holy Man: nothing contrary to it, the withstanding of which would have struck out a flame; nothing to burn against, and burn up, in order to his perfecting; no false will or affection to be resisted by, and to resist, until it was conquered. The Spirit from above just lighted and spread its wings, and sat brooding upon the Divine simplicity of the whole-hearted Nazarene. Heaven could gather and glide into his soul without difficulty, without obstruction. He had not to be taken with violence; the angels of God ascended and descended upon Him unopposed and freely. He presented a smooth channel for the sacred stream, which never grew turbulent, or curdled into foam in his breast, against sullen thwartings of opposing rocks. It "came to its own" in coming to Him, and its own received it with open arms. True, it of necessity involved Him in struggle and suffering, by inspiring Him profoundly against the spirit and principles of the age in which He lived. While working in Him ardent longings to fulfil his mission and kingdom by attracting men to Himself, it led Him to see and feel,

more and more vividly, the wrongness of certain maxims and methods that offered themselves to aid Him in accomplishing what He desired, and that seemed to wear promise of aid ; and compelled Him to reject them. He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be "tempted of the devil." Nor only so ; it also made the falsehood and evil of the world in which He lived to be his daily burden and grief ; wounding Him for our transgressions, laying upon Him the iniquity of us all. The more the heavenly entered into Him, and greatened and waxed within Him, the more, inevitably, the disorder and corruption of the earthly became his cross, until Calvary signified outwardly the culmination of his inward woe.

Yes, He had to endure in Himself a fiery baptism, as the result of the descent upon Him from above. But it was through his contact, thus Spirit-charged, with the bad element surrounding Him, that He suffered what He suffered ; not through the contact of the Spirit with any bad element in *Him*. It met with nothing in Him to cause a painful flame ; touching which it had to become a purging devouring fire. It abode upon Him like a dove brooding over its nest.

Yet, observe, it *had* to abide upon Him. Not without its inspiration could even the holy child Jesus be perfected. Even upon Him it was essential that the heavens should open with their enlightening quickening influences. Who is there, then, that does not need to be "born from above" ? who does not need the action upon him of a greater than himself, to enable him to fulfil himself ? The "little one" must be more than mother-nursed, or Nature-fostered, to become the

“strong nation ;” angels must receive a charge over him, to bear him up in their hands. God must ever flow in, if we are to flow forth divinely. And He *does* flow in, to make us flow forth divinely. Whether or not we recognize the blessed influx, “the Spirit of God moves on the face of the waters.”

But for *us* to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, is to be baptized with *fire*. The existence within us of false tendency and proclivity makes it a flame. Once let it fall upon us, and, straightway, there is turmoil ; straightway some hot work begins. Here is a man wholly at ease and quiet in a pleasant paradise — though it be a fool’s paradise of self-content and free self-gratification ; but a breath from on high stirs in him at last, a breath of higher impulse and aspiration ; and now a struggle sets in, in which the soul sways to and fro, and burnings of remorse and repentance are suffered, with daily self-refusings and self-crucifixions. The man is no longer at peace with himself, but in a great heat of controversy ; no longer a tranquil universe, but a troubled conjunction of antagonisms. His life becomes, as the Scripture represents it, “a battle,” “a warfare.” A fire of discontent is kindled within him ; there rages in him the flame of a conflict between the spirit and the flesh.

Hence, perhaps, the often less winsome and pleasing aspect of some God-driven soul in comparison with some godless worldling. The latter, concurring lightly with each impulse as it rises, rarely checking or denying himself, never worn with earnest solemn striving, or stained with tears of bitter mourning and lamentation for defeat, is therefore apt to impress us more agreeably at times than the former does. *He*, through

his frequent self-repressions and self-mortifications, may be wanting in something of a natural grace or charm that belongs to the other, just in consequence of the absence from him of such self-repressions and self-mortifications. A soldier in the midst of heroic fighting is not always the most attractive-looking object; yet infinitely more worth embracing, with his powder-blackened face and bespattered regimentals, than the spotless perfumed dandy on parade.

When Christ began of old to baptize with the Holy Ghost, it was a baptism of fire. And even so it is still. The stirring within men of the better self, of the Spirit from above, is invariably more or less with "confused noise and garments rolled in blood." Our God, when He touches us, is a "consuming fire." Not *out* of Christ, as one hears it explained sometimes, but *in* Christ; for from the God in Christ proceeds the Spirit, and where the Spirit breathes in human breasts there is burning.

He who is moved to aim loftily, to seek to live on high, above the ordinary level of the world's life, is setting out on what will be a toilsome and a sweltering road.

I saw a vision of a woman, where
Night and new morning strive for domination;
Incomparably pale, and almost fair,
And sad beyond expression.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,
She stood on inner ground that budded flowers;
While, circling in their never-slackening round,
Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,
And every thorn shot upright from its sands
To gall her feet; hoarse laughter peal'd in scorn,
With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not shrink ; her strength
Was strung up until daybreak of delight :
She measured measureless sorrow toward its length,
And breadth, and depth, and height.

I saw a cup sent down and come to her
Brim full of loathing and of bitterness :
She drank with livid lips, that seem'd to stir
The depth, not make it less.

But as she drank, I spied a hand distil
New wine and virgin honey ; making it
First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed, until
She tasted only sweet.

Then earth and heaven were roll'd up like a scroll :
The day had come that day.

But now, while the Spirit, which in Christ was as a brooding dove, is in common men a painful fire, a fire of purification through conflict and consumption, there is yet a difference in the cases of common men. In some, there is so much less that opposes, so much less of the false and the evil to prevail against than exists in others, that, compared with others, the action of the Spirit in them may be said to be as of a dove descending and lighting upon them, rather than the kindling of a fire. Their unwholesome propensities are less fierce and fewer ; they have less gross animalism to be fought with and overcome. Divinely touched, perhaps, in early life, before the nature had grown too fixed, or habit had acquired strength, their surrender is fluent and gentle, with no sharp pangs of remorse for the past, or tumult of resistance. It is with them a quiet gradual nursing and unfolding, rather than a rude breaking up and recreating. The Lord has only to carry *them* in his bosom, not to tread down and reduce them.

Our experience under the Spirit varies. It is not with some as with others. Let none, therefore, be disappointed or ashamed that they have never inwardly passed through what certain saintly men of their acquaintance report of themselves ; because they cannot speak with them of enlargement slowly gained by prolonged and severe conflict, of days and nights of spiritual agony, of having been

Heated hot with burning fears,
And dipp'd in baths of hissing tears.

There is *something* in the least worldened and the sweetest among us that is contrary to the Spirit of the Lord within us ; that involves, at seasons, some heat of conflict : that has to be resisted and crucified, and causes us to groan, being burdened. Yet there are many with whom the presence and operation of the Spirit is less a baptism of fire than a dove-like brooding. They have known from the beginning but little of the pain of self-mortification. They can be loyal and true to their higher impulses, and are growing by degrees toward the likeness of the Perfect Man, without much sweat of struggle. It is well, however, for such to remember that with many it is not so ; that there are those whose comparatively little grace is the fruit of great and sore strivings, who have need to be always watching and fighting, that they may express what beauty they do ; that, meagre though that beauty be at the best, and sadly flecked and broken, it is won heroically, "through much tribulation," with secret heart-searchings and wrestlings, and with purgings of secret grief for failure, that men dream not of. It is well for us, whose upward path is smoother and easier, to remember this, if only that we may be ready to appreciate more warmly the

small attainments of some who seem to us far behind in the race, and to judge more leniently, more tenderly, their shortcomings and defects.

But the heavens open, and the Holy Ghost descends upon us all. We are all baptized with the same Spirit. The grand question for us is, How we are surrendering to its influence, and resigning ourselves to be borne on by it, and lifted up; what we have made and are making of those occasional Divine inflows and inspirations with which we are visited. For "who will not acknowledge," as one has asked, "that he has been carried at times whither he would not, and had nobler thoughts, and felt higher aspirations, than the course of his ordinary life seems to allow? These came to him, he could scarcely tell how; sometimes with outward and apparent cause, and sometimes with none, 'the wind blowing where it listed;' but they were the most important moments of his history for good or for evil, the critical points that have made him what he is, either as he used or neglected them." Let us each take heed, then, that we "receive not the grace of God in vain."

S. A. TIPPLE.

THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH HEARERS.

ST. MATTHEW vii. 24-27; ST. LUKE vi. 47-49.

THE subject suggested by these solemn sentences, which form the conclusion of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, is one in connection with which the value of a synoptical method of studying the Gospels is very apparent. There is reason to fear that it is also one in connection with which that method is too often neglected. We are all accustomed to turn to the First

Gospel for anything pertaining to the great discourse on the kingdom of God and its righteousness, scarcely taking the trouble to turn to the Third to see how the matter is put there. The practice is excusable on the ground that the version of the Sermon in Matthew is so much fuller than in Luke. But it is seldom safe to omit comparison where more than one account is given of the same incident or saying, and the consequence of such neglect in the case of the passage above cited may be serious. We may miss the point of our Lord's words, and fail to find the key to their true interpretation. For while it may be admitted that here also Matthew's version is the fuller, and probably also on the whole the more accurate, there is one very important point which comes out more clearly in the version given by the Third Evangelist. When we read of one man building his house on the rock, and of another building his house on the sand, we are apt to suppose that the point of the contrast lies in the selection made by the two men, respectively, of a foundation whereon to build. The wise man selects rock for his foundation, the foolish man selects sand; and he is foolish because he makes a bad selection—his folly consists in an error of judgment after due deliberation. Hence the theme suggested by the passage is often put, for pulpit purposes, in this form: "The Two Foundations." But the truth is that the contrast intended is not that between two men deliberately selecting different foundations on which to build, but that between two men, one of whom makes the foundation a matter of deliberate consideration, while the other, on the contrary, never takes a moment's thought about a foundation, but proceeds to build at hap-hazard, on the surface,

anywhere, just where he happens to be—on the loose sand on the banks, or even in the bed, of a river dried up by the severe drought and scorching heat of summer, as rivers are so apt to be in the East. Insight into the whole connection of thought in the Sermon might lead us to this conclusion, even were we to confine our attention to Matthew's narrative; but it is *forced* on our attention by the way in which Luke reports Christ's words. He that heareth and doeth is said to be like a man who "built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundations on the rock:" and he that heareth and doeth not is said to be like a man "that, *without a foundation*,¹ built a house upon the earth." That is, the one takes great pains with the foundation of his house, digs below the surface, and goes deep in digging;² continues digging, in short, till he comes down to the rock, which cannot be washed away by the flood, should the waters of the neighbouring stream ever happen to rise to the level of his dwelling: the other takes no pains with the foundation, provides none indeed, but begins at once to build on the surface of the ground.³ Evidently this foolish man is not one who makes a mistake in judgment as to the best foundation for a house, judging sand to be the best, which in certain circumstances it really is; but, rather, one who loses sight of the fact that the found-

¹ χωρὶς θεμελίου.

² ὃς ἐσκαψεν καὶ ἐβάθυνεν. On these words Kitto remarks: "At this very day the mode of building in Christ's own town of Nazareth suggests the source of this image. Dr. Robinson was entertained in the house of a Greek Arab. The house had just been built, and was not yet finished. In order to lay the foundations, he had dug down to the solid rock, as is usual throughout the country here, to the depth of thirty feet, and then built up arches."—"The Pictorial Bible."

³ Bengel seems to have noticed the true point of contrast. His note on Luke vi. 49 is: "θεμέλιον, *fundamentum*, artificiale, *petra*, naturale. Illi opponitur carentia fundamenti; huic terra mera."

ation of a house is a matter of prime importance, and thoughtlessly begins to build, like children who amuse themselves by erecting miniature houses on the sea-shore within high-water mark, destined to be washed away a few hours after by the in-rolling tide.

Having by a careful inspection of the texts ascertained this important fact, let us now see what light it throws on the interpretation of the whole passage.

1. In the light of the true distinction between the two builders, as above stated, we can see the special appropriateness of the emblems employed by our Lord to represent two different types of men in reference to religion. On the general appropriateness of these emblems it is unnecessary to dilate, as that must be obvious to all. The building of a house is manifestly an apt emblem of the profession and practice of religion. In their religion men provide for their souls something analogous to that which a house is for their bodies. The analogy might be drawn out into several particulars. Thus, a house is for rest—it is our place of abode, our home. In like manner, religion is the rest of the soul, as is implied in such texts as the following: “Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee;” “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations;” “I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” The idea underlying these familiar Bible sayings is that, through the culture of the religious affections, a man provides for himself a home for the soul. Again, a house is for shelter from the elements, from cold, rain, snow, stormy winds. In like manner, religion is the soul’s shelter from sin, temptation, fear, and care, as we are taught by the beautiful words of Psalm xci.: “He

that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress : my God ; in him will I trust." Yet again, a house is for comfort : it is not only the place of our abode, to which we always return from our wanderings, and after the duties of the day are over ; it is not merely a place of shelter from the elements ; but, furthermore and above all, it is the scene of domestic happiness and peace. Even so is religion the bliss of the soul. " Blessed are they that dwell in thy house ; " " Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach to thee, that he may dwell in thy courts."

Thus far the figures of this passage are evidently apposite to the purpose to which they are applied. But a difficulty may be felt in reference to the house built on the *sand*, especially when we think of it as built in the hap-hazard manner suggested by Luke's version of our Lord's words. If it were a case of a man committing an error in judgment in the selection of a foundation, one might feel less perplexity ; for to err is human. But can we conceive of any man being so utterly foolish as to build a house on the loose sand, liable to be blown down by a hurricane, and even to be washed away by the mountain torrent when it comes down in full flood ? Men do build houses at the foot of a volcanic mountain, but a volcanic eruption is an event of comparatively rare occurrence, and men feel that it is a risk they may without absolute folly run. But a flood in a river is a thing of annual, or even more frequent, occurrence ; and it seems to violate all natural probability to represent men as acting in entire disregard of so great a risk. But in this very

violation of probability lies the very point and peculiar appositeness of the metaphor. For Christ would suggest that men do in religion things the like of which they would not dream of doing in the ordinary affairs of life; and the implied assertion is unhappily too true. Without doubt it would be difficult to find men anywhere who do not, in the building of their houses, take all possible precaution against the destruction of them by the elements. But the fact is that just such folly is not uncommon in religion; so that, to describe the case truly, the Preacher was under the necessity of violating natural probability in his choice of a figure to describe the character of the man who hears and does not. If He had described the latter as taking into consideration where he might best build his house, and at last resolving to build on sand, He would have given him credit for more thoughtfulness and thoroughness than he possesses; for inconsiderateness is characteristic of the type of men to which he belongs. They are not in earnest in religion; they only play at being religious; at most they are but half in earnest. Thus what on first view appears to be an infelicity in the metaphor employed to describe the man who heareth and doeth not, is seen, after due reflection, to be its very point of merit. And when this is understood, we are at the same time impressed with the peculiar appositeness of the other comparison, of the man who heareth and doeth, to one who, being minded to build a house, begins by digging, and going deep in digging, for a foundation. It points him out in contrast to the other as one who considers well what he is about, bears in mind all the uses of a house, and all that it may have to endure. In a word, his characteristics are con-

siderateness and thoroughness, as those of the other are inconsiderateness and superficiality.

2. But the difference between the two classes of men spoken of by the Preacher is too important to be disposed of in a sentence, and we must therefore now consider more fully what light is thrown on that topic by the contrast drawn between the two builders. Our Lord Himself distinguishes the two classes by representing a man of the one class as one who heareth his sayings and doeth them, and a man of the other class as one who heareth his sayings and doeth them not. The distinction is sufficiently definite for practical purposes. We all have an approximately correct idea of the two types of character thus discriminated. We know pretty well what sort of a man he who hears and does is. He is one who is in thorough earnest in religion, who has it for his constant aim to be, in heart and life, in conformity with the will of Christ as made known in his recorded teaching, and maintains a persistent resolute effort to accomplish his aim; one who devoutly desires and constantly strives to be in thought, feeling, and conduct, in harmony with the Beatitudes; and with the exposition of the law given by Christ as a searching spiritual law, meant to regulate, not merely outward actions, but inward dispositions; and with the portraiture of the true religion as aiming at glorifying God, not at gaining reputation for ourselves; and with the charming description of the life of faith as a childlike trust in God our Father which raises us, above fear and care, into a serene atmosphere of cheerfulness and hope, in which we can rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. He is not one, we understand, who has at-

tained unto perfection in charity and humility and purity of heart, and meekness and singleness of mind, and abhorrence of ostentation in praying and almsgiving and fasting, and unworldliness and childlike trust in a never-sleeping Providence. But he is one who is not contented with merely hearing and admiring the fine sayings of Jesus about these things, admitting them to be very beautiful, and at the same time voting them utterly impracticable, but is minded to live under the power of those Divine words; and seeing clearly, as every man of tender conscience must see, how far short he comes of the lofty ideal embodied therein, he is deeply humbled, and mourns over his worldliness, vanity, and unbelief, the impurity of his heart and the unholiness of his life, and thus is as far as possible from the self-complacency of the Pharisee, and rather inclined to take his place beside the publican, and pray, "God be merciful to me." Understanding the "doing" ascribed to the right-minded hearer in this way, we have no difficulty in removing from our Lord's description of him any appearance of an unevangelic legalism, or in perceiving its perfect compatibility with the great New Testament doctrine that salvation is of grace received by faith. No man who is thoroughly in sympathy with the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is in danger of making any serious mistake as to the footing on which he stands before God. Thoroughgoing moral earnestness is the sure road to faith in Divine grace as the source of salvation, as the history of Paul and of Luther shews. A little earnestness may make a man a *Pharisee*, but a great consuming earnestness will make him a *Christian*, after the Pauline type.

We know, then, what sort of man he is who heareth and doeth. And we have no great difficulty in forming a tolerably correct notion of the other sort of man, who heareth and doeth not. When Christ gives him credit for "hearing," we assume that He means by hearing, everything short of doing. He does not mean to put the distinction between the two classes thus: Whoso heareth my sayings with rapt attention, and with enjoyment of the sentiments uttered, is the right sort of disciple; and whoso heareth listlessly, with his thoughts wandering on other things, is the wrong sort of disciple. He assumes even the worst part of his audience to be attentive delighted hearers. I question if He would have deemed such listless hearers as we are too familiar with in these days worthy of the name of hearers. Nay, I question if, among the crowd assembled on the grassy slopes of the hill of Galilee, to hear the Prophet of Nazareth, there were any such listless non-hearing hearers, who, while the Speaker discoursed on the high things pertaining to the kingdom of God, were thinking of their crops, or their merchandise, or their household cares, or their amusements. The people who composed that crowd had come for the express purpose of hearing the remarkable Person who spoke to them, and not in mechanical compliance with religious custom; and it may be regarded as certain that they all listened with fixed attention and unfeigned pleasure while He discoursed of the beatitudes of the kingdom, and of its pure inward morality, and of its heavenly charity, and of the aversion to ostentation characteristic of its citizens, and of their unworldliness and childlike trust in Providence; all, at least, save the very few artificial, morally per-

verse, religionists, incapable of appreciating anything natural and true and unsophisticated, who might happen to be present, listening with attention enough, but without sympathy.

All heard with pleasure, but the class we now speak of heard and did not. Before experience, one would say the dissociation of doing from such hearing was very unlikely, if not impossible. But experience teaches us that it is neither impossible nor very rare. There are people at all times like those in Israel of whom Ezekiel complains, who talked about him as men talk now about any pulpit celebrity; who sat in groups by the town wall and at the doorsteps, and conversed about the prophet, saying to each other, "Come, I pray you, and hear the word of the Lord." They were all very ready to come and hear. They came in a body; they sat before the prophet, with intent to listen devoutly, as became God's people. They came, they sat down, they heard; but they did not do. With their mouth they shewed much love, but their heart went after their covetousness; and the poor prophet was unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument. They heard his words with delight, but they did them not; they liked his song, but as for translating the poetry into prose, and embodying the sentiment in conduct, that they never for a moment dreamed of.

But it is not necessary to suppose that the neglect of doing, on the part of those whom our Lord had in view, is to be taken so absolutely as it is exhibited in the graphic representation of Ezekiel. In actual experience, we do not always find that men whose religious character is sentimental and hollow wholly

neglect the practice of duties. On the contrary, we often see them busying themselves in "good works" of the technical or conventional sort. We cannot, therefore, draw a hard and fast line between the two classes, and say, The one are doers; the other, non-doers. We require some test to distinguish between doers and doers—between the doing which deserves the name, and the doing which does not. And here the contrast between the builders, as above explained, comes to our aid, supplying us with a ready means of ascertaining in what respects precisely the two classes of hearers differ from each other. It will be observed that in the figurative representation both men appear as building a house. The difference between the wise man and the foolish is not that the wise man builds for himself a house, and that the foolish is content to do without one, not seeing any necessity for it in the dry warm weather of summer. Both build, and the difference lies in the quality of their work. One looks well to his foundation, the other never thinks of a foundation, but commences to build on the surface at hazard. So stands the contrast in the figure. What is the moral import of it?

Two points of difference in character are clearly hinted at. *First*, the wise builder has a prudent regard to the future. He anticipates the coming of storms, and he aims at being well provided against these. The foolish builder, on the contrary, thinks only of the present. If all is well to-day, he recks not of to-morrow, and the storms it may bring. *Second*, the wise builder does not look merely to appearance. The question with him is not, What will look well? but, What will stand, being founded on the rock? The

foolish builder, on the other hand, cares for appearance only. His house looks as well as another's, so far as what is above ground is concerned ; and as for what is below ground, that, in his esteem, goes for nothing.

Carrying these two distinctions with us into the spiritual sphere, we are supplied with the means of distinguishing very exactly between the genuine and the spurious professors of religion. Taking the latter of the two distinctions first, the two classes of men differ thus : the spurious look only to what is seen, the outward act ; the genuine look to what is not seen, the hidden foundation of inward disposition, the heart-motive, out of which flow the issues of life. The outward acts of both may be the same, but the motive of the one is love of goodness, that of the other is vanity. Both pray ; but one prays by preference in secret, his care being, not to be known as a praying man, but to obtain the boon he asks of Heaven ; the other prays by preference at the corner of the street, his aim being, not to obtain the favour of God, or the thing he seems to desire, but to get credit for a devotional spirit. Both give alms ; but one from love and pity, with shame-faced modesty ; the other from ostentation, not sympathizing with the poor, but seeking a reputation for philanthropy.

Thus far the doer of Christ's sayings is the man who in all conduct attaches supreme importance to motive and disposition ; and the non-doer, the man who is not concerned to be right in heart, but regards only the visible part of morality, the external deed.

But another equally marked distinction between the genuine and the counterfeit disciple is to be found in their respective attitudes towards the future. The one

has forethought, the other has none ; the one thinks of to-morrow, and the trials it may bring ; the other thinks only of to-day, and its bright sunshine. The one counts the cost when he thinks of becoming a Christian ; the other receives the Word with joy, leaving out of view the responsibilities and difficulties, the "tribulations" he is likely to encounter in the career on which he is entering. Not much is said of this distinction between the true citizen of the kingdom and the false in the course of the Sermon on the Mount, the great matter insisted on throughout being sincerity. But though forethought, counting the cost, is little emphasized in the body of the discourse, it gets due attention in the close. Why does the Preacher refer to the storms that will come, if not to suggest the necessity of keeping them duly in view ? He says in effect, See that your religion be such as will stand the test, for a testing time will come. Regard to the testing time, therefore, must be an attribute of genuine piety. It may be said, Sincerity will always stand the test ; therefore it is enough to be sincere. But the question is, Does not forethought enter as an element into sincere character ? Or, to put it the other way, Is not the want of forethought an essential characteristic of spurious religious character ? It certainly is ; for the man who has regard only to appearances, would never profess religion at all if he considered the future. He acts from impulse, imitation, and fashion ; and the use of religion as a stay in temptation and trouble is not in all his thoughts. Hence we understand why Christ so often presented the difficulties of the spiritual life to the view of those offering themselves as disciples. It was his way of ridding Himself of counterfeit discipleship, ori-

ginating in by-ends or thoughtless sentiment, and of securing that his circle of followers should include only men whose religion was an affair, not of sentiment alone, but of reason and conscience—of reason looking well before and after, and of conscience realizing seriously moral responsibility.

3. We have thus ascertained the distinctive characteristics of the two classes of hearers. But it is one thing to discriminate between these two classes on paper, another thing to discern and judge between them as existing in real life. Judging who is the genuine man, and who is the counterfeit, is a difficult and delicate task. We can only judge from appearance: and, judging from appearance, we run a risk of thinking the pretender the better man. For *he* looks to appearances; he makes appearance his study. Therefore I should not be surprised were his house to appear the finer of the two, so that men should say, looking at it, What an elegant structure, compared with that other building which looks so plain and unadorned! False disciples often gain golden opinions, when true disciples, with their faults all on the surface, are of little account.

Who then is to decide as to the merits of the two builders? The Divine Preacher, with true insight into the state of the case, replies, The elements. The rain, the winds, and the floods, are the infallible judges of the builders and their work. The house built on the rock is described as successfully enduring the trial: “it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.” The house built on the sand is represented as tumbling down in utter ruin under the trial: “it fell, and great was the fall of it.” The rock-founded house, whatever its

faults apparent above ground, is thus manifested to be genuine ; and the house built on the sand, with all its attractions, is manifested to be spurious. The elements in the metaphor represent generally times of severe trial, the judgment-days which overtake men even in this world occasionally, and in which many fair edifices of religious profession go down. The forms in which the trial may come are very diverse. There are trials by outward calamities, trials by religious doubt, trials by sinful desires, trials in business, by commercial crises and the like ; trials by tribulations, such as overtake professors of religion in evil times. The thing to be laid to heart is that trial, in one form or another, is to be expected. It will come. And another thing should be remembered : the crisis that is to try us may come suddenly, leaving no time for preparation, no time for saving one's household furniture, barely time to save one's own life. Speaking of such a crisis in another discourse, Jesus said, " Then let them which be in Judæa flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. Neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes." ¹ The suddenness with which the visitation of judgment may come is graphically depicted in these words of our Lord which we have been studying—the very abruptness of the style suggesting the idea of a thunder-storm suddenly arising among the hills, whence rivers take their rise, after a long period of summer heat and drought. " Descended the rain, and came the floods, and blew the winds." ² Black clouds gather ; lightnings flash ; thunder rolls ;

¹ Matt. xxiv. 16-18.

² Κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι.—Matt. vii. 27.

rain falls in torrents ; down rush the floods, filling the dry bed of the water-course from bank to bank ; the winds blow with tropical violence : and away goes the house which was built on the loose sand in the dry river-channel that looked so well in the bright summer sun. How many illustrations of this picture one might draw, if he wished, from current events !

A. B. BRUCE.

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF ST. PAUL,

IN THE SUPERScription OF HIS EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE superscriptions of St. Paul's Epistles are a special study. In them the Apostle appears, not so much standing, equipped in full for the task lying before him, as starting, like a racer eager for the race. He cannot, with cool conventional exactitude, hold himself in, within the lines of customary commonplace, until the formalities of designation and salutation are hurried over. He is quivering with restrained emotion in every fibre of his moral being. His mind is not only full to the brim : it is gushing up and running over. The overflow laves the astonished reader. But his astonishment rises into admiration when he notes that the ideas thus lavishly poured forth are among the richest that ever welled up in the mind of the Apostle. The superscription of the Epistle to the Romans is peerless for its wealth of theological idea.

Verse 1.—*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.*—KING JAMES'S VERSION.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle,

having been set apart to God's gospel.—THE WRITER'S REVISED VERSION.

The first word in the superscription of this Epistle is, in accordance with Hebrew, Greek, and Roman usage, the name of the writer, "Paul."

He immediately adds, differentiatingly, "a servant of Jesus Christ." Tischendorf, on the authority of the Vatican manuscript in particular, reverses the order of our Saviour's names, and reads, "Christ Jesus." Certainly without good reason; for not only is the overwhelming majority of external authorities, inclusive of Tischendorf's Sinaitic manuscript, in favour of the *Received Text*; it is likewise the case that, when the two names are used by the Apostle conjointly in the genitive, he almost always collocates them "Jesus Christ;" whereas, when he uses them in the dative, he almost always reverses the order, and says "Christ Jesus."

"Jesus Christ's servant," says the Apostle. But instead of "servant," Schrader and Rilliet use the word "slave." Wordsworth, Conybeare, Hodge, and Darby approach the same translation: they render the expression "a bondsman," or, without the article, "bondsman of Jesus Christ." And so Bishop Colenso, "a bondman of Jesus Christ." Very unhappily, as we conceive; for slavery and bondage suggest ideas of degradation and compulsory service. The Apostle was no slave, even to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is no slaveholder. Slavery is not of the essence of servitude or service. It is only an accidental and ignoble phase of a relationship that is far more generic than itself.

It has been disputed whether, in calling himself a

"servant," St. Paul uses the word to denote what he was, in common with all other Christians, in his relation to Jesus, or, specifically, to denote what was his peculiar relation to the Saviour, in distinction from that of the majority of other Christians. A precise line, we suspect, cannot be drawn between the generic and specific spheres of the word's reference. It is not the differentiating peculiarity of any particular class of Christians to be Christ's "servants." Even those who are the least of the little ones in the Church are "the servants of Christ."¹ They "serve the Lord Christ."² All those who intelligently and in sincerity "say that Jesus Christ is *Lord*,"³ acknowledge, in the very act of saying what they say, that they are his *servants*. Lordship and service are correlates. And in proportion, therefore, as men are characterized by submission to Christ's will, and devotedness to his work, are they, whatever their social position, more or less intensively and emphatically, "servants of Jesus Christ;" just as Moses of old was intensively and emphatically "a servant of God."⁴ With a corresponding emphasis was Abraham a "servant of God."⁵ So were Joshua,⁶ Elijah,⁷ Hezekiah,⁸ and many others, inclusive of all Jewish kings, prophets, priests, in general. So, with supreme intensity of emphasis, was Jesus Christ Himself "the servant of God."⁹ From first to last of his mediatorial career, He took the will of his Father as his own will, and surrendered his entire energies to do the work which his Father gave Him to do. "My meat," said He, "is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."¹⁰

¹ Eph. vi. 5, 6.² Col. iii. 24.³ 1 Cor. xii. 3.⁴ 1 Chron. vi. 49; Dan. ix. 11.⁵ Psal. cv. 6, 42.⁶ Judges ii. 8.⁷ 2 Kings ix. 36.⁸ 2 Chron. xxxii. 16.⁹ Isa. xlii. 1; lii. 13, &c.¹⁰ John iv. 34.

"A called apostle." The two words should undoubtedly go together, although the Peshito Version has separated them, introducing, indeed, the conjunction between them, "called, and an apostle." Theodoret, too, apparently had regarded them as standing apart. And J. C. Herzog would likewise separate them; but, instead of regarding the word "called" as standing apart, he would connect it with the preceding expression, thus, "a called servant of Jesus Christ, an apostle." Both methods of interpretation, though possibilities, are unnatural and violent.

Wycliffe had misunderstood the Vulgate Version of the phrase.¹ He renders it "clepid (*i.e.*, yclept) an apostle." The rendering is reproduced by Heinfetter, "denominated an apostle." And, what is far more wonderful, it is reproduced by Jowett, who certainly, however, did not, like Heinfetter, regard the word "called" as equivalent to "named." His version is, "called an apostle." Dr. Hodge's version is the same. It is very objectionable. It would be much better to adopt the paraphrastic version of Erasmus, reproduced by Tyndale in the first edition of his New Testament, "called unto the office of an apostle." It would be better still to accept the briefer version of Tyndale, in his 1534 edition, "called to be an apostle," a version followed by the Geneva, and adopted by King James's translators. But there is an ambiguity in both of these renderings which is not in the Original. He who is simply "called to be an apostle" may have his apostleship as yet only in the future. *The Greek expression imports that the writer was actually in the office of the apostolate.* The word rendered *called* is an

¹ *Vocatus apostolus.*

adjective¹ qualifying the noun "apostle," so that the expression means, and must mean, "a called apostle." And yet the translation is only approximatively exact, inasmuch as the English word "called"² is a participle, not an adjective. The Vulgate translator, working with the Latin language, had the same difficulty to encounter. The nicety of the Greek original is untranslatable.³ St. Paul was desirous, it seems, that the Roman Christians should understand that he had not run on his apostolic errand unsent. He had not intruded into the office, or assumed it to himself. He had been divinely called, and he was not disobedient to the heavenly summons. Whether, at the time he employed the word "called," he had actually in his mind those ecclesiastical malcontents who represented him as an ultroneous apostle, or at best one that was man-made; or whether, without intentional reference to those malcontents, he desired to assert his perfect equality, as regards Divine vocation, with those other apostles of the Lord who had been called to the office ere our Lord's ascension, we cannot tell, and need not conjecture. It is enough that we know that the expression claims for his own apostleship a Divine origin.

The call of Paul to the apostolate dates from the supernatural event which occurred while he was on his way to Damascus. It was involved in the answer which was given by our Saviour to the earnest interrogatory of the stricken man, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The answer was, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must

¹ κλητός.

² Corresponding to κληθείς, or κκλημένος.

³ Erasmus felt the difficulty. "*Tacet autem ferme perinde quasi vocaticius apostolus, sive vocatione apostolus.*"

do."¹ The Lord revealed through Ananias "what he must do." "Go thy way," was the Lord's injunction to Ananias, "for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."² After he was baptized, he straightway preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."³ Thus he began his apostolical work. On going to Arabia,⁴ he would doubtless prosecute it, while he would improve the opportunity of getting ripened, in more or less of voluntary seclusion, for the full discharge of its responsibilities. And when, at length, he went up to Jerusalem, he gave himself unreservedly to the work which was the supreme and central duty of the office.⁵ During this his first visit as a Christian to Jerusalem, his commission was renewed, and the sphere within which he was in the main to exercise it was specified: "Depart; for I will send thee far hence, unto the Gentiles."⁶ He was not disobedient. He went to Tarsus,⁷ and thence to Antioch;⁸ and while he was in this latter city, his commission was once more formally renewed. "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."⁹ It was thus emphatically true that St. Paul was a *called* apostle."

The Apostle proceeds to say of himself, *Having been set apart to God's gospel*. This expression, while constituting a third clause in apposition with the name "Paul," stands, nevertheless, in special intimacy of connection with the immediately preceding clause, even as that immediately preceding clause stands in a similar relation to the one that goes before. As it was spe-

¹ Acts ix. 6.² Ibid. ix. 15.³ Ibid. ix. 20.⁴ Gal. i. 17.⁵ Acts ix. 27-29.⁶ Ibid. xxii. 21.⁷ Ibid. xi. 25.⁸ Ibid. xi. 26.⁹ Ibid. xiii. 2.

cially in the way of being "a called apostle" that St. Paul was "a servant of Jesus Christ," so it was specially in the way of "having been set apart to God's gospel" that he was "a called apostle."

The expression, "God's gospel," is preferable as a translation to the articulated expression, "the gospel of God," inasmuch as there is no article in the Original. The particular *good news of God* referred to stood out, of itself, so prominently to the mind of the gospel-loving writer, that he dispensed with the usual phraseological sign of demonstration. The omission does not seem to be wonderful, nor is it perplexing, although it is all but unique in connection with the New Testament usage of the word *gospel*. We say, "all but unique," for Revelation xiv. 6 may be regarded as a similar instance. In all other passages—2 Corinthians xi. 4 and Galatians i. 6 being of course excepted—the word "gospel" is accompanied with the article. In consequence, however, of the omission of the article here, Van Hengel proposes to interpret the expression as meaning "a godlike gospel."¹ It is an unhappy proposal, though emanating from a distinguished exegete. The expression, though anarthrous, is evidently quite parallel in import with the articulated phrase, "the gospel of God."

Chrysostom had no difficulty with the omission of the article, but he thought that the expression meant "good news *concerning* God." He thus regarded the word "God" as being in what grammarians call *the genitive of the object*. But the special contents of the second and third verses seem to make it evident that the word *God* is here in *the genitive of the subject*,

¹ *Eene Goddelijke heilmaar.*

which, in this instance, is equivalent to *the genitive of the author, or the cause*. "The gospel of God" is "the gospel that has emanated from God." It is the good news which He has communicated to men concerning Jesus Christ.

The Apostle says of himself that he "had been set apart to this gospel." The expression is *multum in parvo*. It means that the Apostle had been divinely set apart from all other occupations, for the purpose of devoting his entire energies to the furtherance of the gospel. He was to give himself "wholly" to the work of proclaiming, explaining, defending, and enforcing the good news concerning Christ.

When was he thus devoted to the service of the gospel? Expositors differ. Some suppose that the reference is to that Divine purpose which is spoken of in Galatians i. 15, "When it pleased God, who *separated* me from my mother's womb."¹ Others think that the reference is to the actual historical accomplishment of the purpose in the occurrence of his conversion.² Others, that the reference is to the still later event that is recorded in Acts xiii. 2, in which we read that "the Holy Ghost said, *Separate* me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." This last opinion, if held in such an exclusive way as to oust from consideration the realities on which the other two opinions are based, cannot be commended. It is too slavishly dependent on "letter" as distinguished from "spirit," deriving, as it does, almost all its cogency from the use of the word "separate." As to the other two opinions, they are but the two sides—the obverse and the reverse—of one single reality, bearing

¹ Comp. Jer. i. 5.

² See Acts ix.

the insignia and superscription of the Lord. The historical fulfilment of the Divine purpose is the obverse of the coin, on which we naturally fix, in the first place, our attention. The Divine purpose itself we consider in the second place. It lies behind.

Some have supposed that in the word, which we translate *having been set apart*, or *separated*,¹ the Apostle makes a glancing allusion to his former *Pharisaism*. The word *Pharisee* certainly means *Separatist*. And the critics referred to, inclusive of Erasmus on the one hand and Paulus on the other, have imagined that the Apostle, as if with a holy phraseological play, intimates that he was now a Pharisee in the best sense of the word—a Christian Pharisee. The pun is far too small and artificial to be entertained for a single moment.

Verse 2.—(*Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.*)—KING JAMES'S VERSION.

Which he promised afore through his prophets in sacred writings.—THE WRITER'S REVISED VERSION.

The relation of this second verse (bracketed, as will be observed, in King James's Version) to the preceding and succeeding context is matter of dispute among expositors. We shall consider it, after we have passed under review the details of the phraseology.

Which he promised afore, that is, *which gospel God pre-announced to men in a promissory form*. King James's translators have rendered the verb as if it had been a pluperfect. In this peculiar rendering they followed in the wake of the Geneva Version (though not of its first edition in 1557). The Geneva Version,

¹ ἀφωρισμένος.

again, followed in the wake of Beza, who, in his turn, followed in the wake of the Latin Vulgate. The version of Tyndale, followed by Alford in his New Testament, and by the "Five Clergymen," is undoubtedly the correct one, "he promised afore," or "before."

Moses Stuart says that "our English Version, *promised afore*, does not give the proper meaning of the word." He would render it "declared," or "published in former times." And even Ewald gives the same translation.¹ But both critics had lost sight of the difference between the conventional import of the word as used in the active voice, and its conventional import as used in the middle. The compounded verb² occurs indeed nowhere else in the New Testament, but the uncompounded verb³ occurs frequently, and always in the middle voice; and it never means simply *to publish* or *declare*, but invariably either *to promise* or *to profess*.⁴

When the Apostle says that *the gospel was promised in former times*, he doubtless had reference, though perhaps somewhat indefinitely, or without conscious discrimination, to its subject-matter. It was not so much the Divine news, as news, that was promised all along the Old Testament dispensations; it was rather the great reality itself, the great mediatorial work, which, on its historical eventuation in the dawn of the New Testament times, gave occasion to the New Testament form of the gospel, and constitutes the animating "spirit" that gives all its moral vitality and potency to the news. The promise of this great reality was itself an invaluable form of gospel, though a

¹ *Vorverkündete*.

² προεπαγγέλλομαι.

³ ἐπαγγέλλομαι.

⁴ See Mark xiv. 11; Acts vii. 5; Gal. iii. 19; Titus i. 2, &c.

simpler and grander form was realized when the promise was fulfilled in historical fact. The promise was the life-blood of the ancient dispensations: the preaching of that, which at length fulfilled the promise, is the life-blood of the new.

It is of some importance to notice that it is in the way of pointing out what was distinctive of the ancient dispensations that the Apostle speaks of *the "promise" of the gospel*. Hence it would be unwarrantable to assume, with Melancthon, that *promise* is the distinguishing peculiarity of the gospel.¹ There is, it is true, an element of promise that is essentially involved in the gospel. There is, in other words, an element that looks forward, and points with its fingers to blessings to come. There is in the gospel, and in all good news, a bud of promise for the future. But there is likewise something which, in these latter days, is retrospective, ever earnestly pointing back to that great event, accomplished for all ages, which constitutes the "meritorious cause" of human salvation, and of everlasting life to those who are "dead in trespasses and sins." This retrospective feature must now be for ever one of the gospel's prominent characteristics.²

The gospel was promised afore by God "*through his prophets*." Many of the older editors of the Greek Text regarded the pronoun³ here employed as intensive.⁴ Robert Stephens, for instance, and Beza, the Elzevirs, Mills, Wetstein, Griesbach, and Scholz. But as we should not have expected, had the statement run in the first person, that the Divine Speaker would have said

¹ "Lex est doctrina præcipiens quales esse nos et quid agere oporteat, . . . at Evangelium est promissio quæ pollicetur nobis remissionem peccatorum gratis," &c.—*Comm. in loc.*

² See I Cor. xvi. 1-4; I Tim. i. 15, &c.

³ αὐτοῦ.

⁴ αὐτοῦ.

"through *my own* prophets," instead of "through *my* prophets," modern editors have with the greatest propriety treated the pronoun as unintensive ¹—"through *his* prophets." This is the reading of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles; and, in consequence of fineness of literary instinct, it was the reading of Bengel in his day, and of Erasmus too in his.

The prophets, through whom the gospel was divinely promised, were "God's prophets." They were under the peculiar influence of God, and spake "fore" and "for" Him. The corresponding Hebrew term, which no doubt floated in before the mind of the Apostle, has no essential reference to prediction, but graphically represents the up-welling, from a hidden source, of thoughts too deep for the mind of man to originate. As, however, the most wonderful of these thoughts had actually reference to what was yet future, during the currency of the Old Testament dispensations, the ideas of prediction and prophecy did, as a matter of fact, to a large extent coalesce.

It was "in sacred writings" that the predictions of the prophets, containing the promises of God, were handed on from generation to generation. Thus, upon the whole, would we render the Apostle's anarthrous expression. It is the most literal rendering. We might suppose, indeed, as do Fritzsche, Krehl, and many others, that the phrase, though indefinite in form, is definite in intention, so that it may be translated, as in King James's Version, *in "the" holy scriptures*. Or we might suppose that the plural phrase, "holy scriptures," is used as a kind of proper name, like our English expressions, in the singular number, "holy

¹ ἀντροῦ.

scripture." and "holy writ." Or we might take Paulus's interpretation, "in holy scripture passages." But it is better and simpler to abide by the most literal translation, and the most indefinite interpretation, "in sacred writings," or "scriptures." As there is often a charm in the definite as opposed to the indefinite, so there is frequently just as great a charm, though of another kind, in the indefinite, as distinguished from the infinite. Meyer, Van Hengel, Lipsius, and many others, agree with us in the omission of the article in translation.

It is worthy of observation that this is the only Scripture passage in which the word "holy" is applied to the "scriptures." It has been seized upon, however, with avidity, as an appropriate diacritical characteristic of the contents of "the volume of the book;" and hence nothing is more common in the nomenclature of the Churches, than the expression, "the holy scriptures," "the holy Bible." So far as the Greek adjective¹ is concerned, it is certainly as applicable to *writings* as to *men*. It conventionally corresponds to our word "sacred," and is applicable to all objects that are regarded as having a special moral connection with the "adorable" God. The corresponding Hebrew adjective has a similar width of applicability. In living English, on the other hand, there is a tendency to let the word "holy" side off and appropriate itself to the designation of right moral character, as existing either in the Creator Himself or in the creature in his normal relation to the will of the Creator. If this tendency go on, perhaps by-and-by the word "sacred" may supplant the word "holy" as appropriately qualitative of

¹ ἅγιος. See ἅγιος, ἁγίζομαι, &c.

such *things* as *writings, places, days, &c.*, which may have, in the minds of men, a special relation to God.

Why should the Apostle say of the "gospel," to which he was consecrated, that it was "promised by God in former times, through his prophets, in sacred scriptures"? Chrysostom thought that the Apostle had in view to take off the edge from the objection to his doctrine, that it was a novelty. "He shews," says the great oratorical expositor, "that the gospel was older than the Greeks." Theophylact echoes this idea; and it has been re-echoed down through the ages by many succeeding expositors. Grotius caught it up, and handed it on.¹ Others, such as Fritzsche and Jowett, suppose that the one aim of the Apostle was to exalt the gospel as a thing of unspeakable moment and majesty. And the same thought had, to a partial extent, gleamed into the mind of Ambrosiaster.² Olshausen thinks that it must have been the Apostle's aim to shew how closely the Old Testament is linked to the New. Köllner thinks that his design must have been to shew that Christianity is not only as Divine as Judaism, but is also its complement. Others have other ideas. But it is vain to spur conjecture. The Apostle has not told us his special aim, and it is needless to guess it. Neither need we assume that it was an aim consisting of but one filament of thought or feeling. The words of the verse may have been dictated in the midst of a multitude of thoughts, embracing not a few of the items which have been laid hold of by expositors, and others to boot. We can easily conceive that the heart of the great Evangelist would be

¹ "Nolite novitate percelli," &c.

² "Ut quam vera et magnifica sit promissio, ex his videretur: nemo enim rem vilem magnis precursoribus nunciat."

glowing when he realized that the Divine evangel, to which he had been set apart, was the burden of all anterior ages, and that the burden-bearers, who carried it in their "earthen vessels," and in whose rear he came, constituted a long and brilliant succession of the most illustrious of mortals.

As to the contextual relation of the verse, expositors have very generally recognized that, in the superscription of this epistle, thought urges thought, like wave rolling in upon wave. The exuberance of the writer's mind is something wonderful, and his powers of formal grammatical construction seem to have been taxed to the uttermost by the *embarras des richesses*. Hence the appearance of parentheses in his composition.¹ And this second verse has been very generally regarded as an obvious specimen. The line of thought, in other words, has been considered as suspended at the close of the first verse, and resumed at the commencement of the third verse, so that the first words of this latter verse, "concerning his Son," are viewed as grammatically knitted to the last words of the first verse, "God's gospel," thus intentionally and directly exhibiting the subject-matter of the Divine good news. This conception of the construction was entertained by Melancthon.² It was approved of by Beza, who, in all his editions after that of 1556, enclosed the second verse within brackets. He was followed in this typographical fencing by the English Geneva Version, and thence by King James's Version, where it stands erect to this day, and also by many editors of the Greek text, such as Courcelles, Leusden, Mills, Wetstein, Schöttgen,

¹ "Notabile παρανεθέσεως patheticæ exemplum."—Wolle, *De Parenthesi Sacri*, p. 63.

² *Commentarii*, 1540.

Griesbach, Scholz. With good taste Bengel threw out the clumsy brackets, but he believed none the less in the parenthetical relation of the verse. Almost all subsequent editors have omitted the brackets, but Heumann regards the omission as "a great mistake," and is positive that the verse was an interlineation introduced by the Apostle when he was reading over the letter before despatching it.

Theodoret, characterized by keen exegetical intuition, saw nothing of a parenthetical nature in Verse second. He supposed that the initial expression of verse third, "concerning his Son," is to be grammatically construed with the verb "he promised afore;" so that the gospel of God, according to him, is represented as something that was promised in Old Testament times "concerning God's Son." This interpretation has commanded the suffrages of a very large group of expositors, inclusive of such names as Tholuck, Rückert, Meyer, Fritzsche, Reithmayr, Philippi, Van Hengel. But it has been rejected by Reiche, Winzer, Moses Stuart, Maier, Oltramare, Baumgarten-Crusius, Umbreit, Vaughan, &c., who, whatever theory they have of parentheses—and in this they differ—agree in regarding the words "concerning his Son" as connected with the concluding expression in the first verse, and as thus exhibiting the subject-matter of "God's gospel."

There is a third mode of construing the initial expression "concerning his Son." It consists in uniting it to the concluding words of Verse second: "in sacred writings concerning his Son." This was apparently the interpretation of Augustine,¹ and it seems to have

¹ *Inchoata Expositio.*

been the idea of Erasmus; for in his translation he obliterates the commonly inserted comma between the words "in sacred writings" and the words "concerning his Son," while he interposes commas both before and after the united expressions. Assuredly it was the construction approved of by Tyndale, whose translation is, "in the holy scriptures that make mention of his Son."

Which of the three constructions embodies the idea of the Apostle? That of Tyndale, Erasmus, and Augustine, has not a little to commend it. The omission of the article in connection with the word "scriptures" would at once be accounted for, and the current of the discourse would run on unobstructed. Nevertheless, the solemnity of the expression, "sacred writings," or "scriptures," makes it most natural to refer it indefinitely to the sum-total of the Old Testament Bible. Of the other two constructions, that which throws Verse second into a parenthesis, cuts asunder, in a too violent fashion, the expression "God's gospel" from the words which exhibit its subject-matter, "concerning his Son." And as we should never, without a decisive reason, postulate the existence of an absolute parenthesis, we come to the conclusion that, in the Apostle's mind, the expression "concerning his Son" connected itself with the verb "he promised in former times." The only objection of any weight that can be alleged against this construction is the apparent incongruity of the idea *that the gospel was promised concerning our Saviour*. Strictly speaking, it was not the gospel, or the good news itself, but the subject-matter of the news, which was promised. But the whole perplexity resolves itself

into what is common enough in the composition of those who have not studied, or who do not regard, the "wisdom of words" and the "excellency of speech"—a little tanglement of phraseology. It is common enough in New Testament diction. But in this case the tanglement may be disentangled thus: the Apostle had been "set apart to God's gospel, which, under the form of a promise concerning his Son, he announced afore, through his prophets, in sacred writings."

JAMES MORISON.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

XI.—THE LATER TEACHING.

LOOKED at on the surface, the conflict of Jesus with the Jews seems but an ignoble waste of the noblest Being earth has known. And in many respects it was what it seemed. The antagonists of Christ were poor enough, especially when compared with Him. Shallow, selfish, short-sighted men; bigots in creed and in conduct; capable of no sin disapproved by tradition, incapable of any virtue unenjoined by it; too respectable to be publicans and sinners; at once too ungenerous to forgive sins against their own order, and too blind to see sins within it—they remain for all time our most perfect types of fierce and inflexible devotion to a worship instituted and administered by man, but of relentless and unbending antagonism to religion as the service of God in spirit and in truth. And to think of our holy and beautiful Christ, his heart the home of a love that enfolded the world, his spirit the stainless and truthful mirror of the Eternal, his mouth dropping with every word pearls of divinest wisdom—to think of

Him hated and wasted by these men, is to think, as it were, of the crown of God, with all its stars, dimmed, corroded, dissolved by mists bred in dismal swamps formed by the decayed life of ancient worlds. The conflict of evil with good is inevitable; we dare not mourn it, dare only welcome it as the hard but necessary way to peace and perfection. But as the issues are immense, we expect the struggle to be manifestly immense also. If the Prince of God stands forth to fight, we cannot but wish it to be with a godlike adversary, and not with men who hold tradition to be as sacred as the law and temple of their God.

But the ignoble was all on one side; on the other was a magnanimity that only became the more magnanimous in the struggle with the little and the mean. As the darkness deepened round the Hero's path his heroism shone the brighter; as the conflict thickened his strength became calmer, mightier, more manifest. His consciousness grew more exalted as his way grew more troubled. The shadows that fell upon his spirit were pierced and penetrated and made translucent by the light which streamed from within. And the change in his spirit was marked by a correspondent change in his teaching. He became sadder, was in speech as in soul more the Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected of men; less the exalted servant of God coming in beauty over the mountains and through the valleys to publish peace. The contradiction of sinners was the prophecy of Calvary. The iron had entered his soul, and his heart was bearing its cross. The spring-time was passed; autumn with its falling leaves and withered flowers had come. Cities, once zealous, were cold; crowds, once ardent, were suspicious; ene-

mies, once soft-spoken and fearful, were harsh and arrogant. But just when men were falsest and feeblest He was truest to Himself. His person came into the foreground ; He Himself became the great theme of his discourses. He proclaimed Himself to be greater than David or Solomon, as the last and greatest of the prophets, as above the law, as superior to the temple, as the revealer of God. He declared Himself to be the Bread of Life, the Life of the World, the Light of the World. The impending suffering He glorified ; the death that was coming so surely He interpreted into a sacrifice of universal efficacy and eternal worth. The gathering clouds left his soul clear. His confidence in his cause and triumph seemed to grow in calmness and rise in strength as the storm increased. His spirit had depths storms could not reach, heights they could not disturb. The fierce wind may vex the surface of the ocean till its waves look like loose and rolling mountains, but down fathoms deep the waters lie placid as the lake smiling in the summer sun. The clouds may darken the sky, and speak to us of tempest and thunder and gloom ; but away above, on the everlasting hills, eternal calm and soft sunshine are making radiant sleep. So while human passions were darkening Christ's path, and human enmities were preparing the doom that was to be his glory, sweet peace sat like the blessed angel of God within his spirit, and filled it with celestial light and joy.

The conflict of Jesus with the Jews was thus fruitful of the most opposite results. While without Him it created an atmosphere of doubt, suspicion, and estrangement, within Him it marked the rise of a clearer and more certain consciousness of his nature and mission.

The antagonism of the Pharisees affected the people. They could hardly imagine that the men who had been to their fathers and were to themselves like the incarnated wisdom of the past could be altogether wrong. Names, too, especially when coined in the schools, are moral forces of a very powerful order, and so to be called "the Friend of publicans and sinners," "a speaker of blasphemies," a Sabbath breaker," a child and agent of "Beelzebub," was to be enveloped in a set of associations that only the deepest knowledge and truest love could pierce and disperse. Then, other influences came to the help of the custom that almost compels the led to follow the leaders. Jesus was too true to the Divine ideal He embodied to gratify the wishes or fulfil the hopes of the men who thought to make Him an idol. The idol of the crowd must not transcend it; if he does, the passion that prompted to worship passes into the fury that pants to destroy. To be hailed by a people that did not understand Him, must have been to Jesus but as the prelusive murmur of a cry that was to end in the shout, "Crucify him!"

Most significantly the first word of doubt and disappointment comes from the Baptist. The man who had proclaimed Jesus as the Christ was also the man who sent to ask, "Art thou he who should come, or do we look for another?"¹ The question was that of a man not disillusioned, but doubtful, expectant, wishful, yet afraid that the hope which grew dearer and intenser in his solitude might prove to be false. He saw much in Jesus to justify it, his preaching, his call, his power to move and inspire the people; but he also saw much to condemn it, in his obscurity, his refusal to exercise

¹ Matt. xi. 3.

political power, his love of seclusion and Galilee, his dislike of publicity and Jerusalem. The Baptist, as a prophet, could admire the great Preacher; but, as an ascetic, could only doubt the claims and authority of one who was reputed to be "gluttonous and a wine-bibber." So the conflict of doubt and desire, fear and hope, urged him to make the touching appeal to Jesus, to which Jesus so finely answered — "Go and shew John those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."¹

But the people did not halt and hesitate like John. More governed by impulse, less possessed by an exalted and spiritual faith, they took an ungratified wish for an unfulfilled hope. They did not feel, like the Baptist, the Divine beauty that lived even in the blurred image of Jesus presented to him by curious report, but they hastily concluded that He who was not a Messiah in their sense could be no Messiah at all. So when Jesus returned to the cities where his mightiest works had been done, He found coldness: they refused repentance, and He announced judgment.² But even while the pain of desertion was freshest and most bitter, the consciousness of Divine Sonship was deepest and most real, and He knew Himself as the Son who knew the Father, whom the Father knew, the Revealer of his word and will to the world.³

Now here we find the root and source of the peculiarities that distinguish Christ's later teaching. It is more personal than the earlier, more concerned with the claims and meaning of his person, the reason of his

¹ Matt. xi. 4-5.

² Ibid. xi. 20-24.

³ Ibid. xi. 25-27.

coming, the authority of his words and purpose of his work. In the very degree men turned from Him the face of the Father turned to Him, and so his filial consciousness became fuller, clearer, more intense. The two things, the growth of isolation and antagonism on the one hand, and the growth of this fuller consciousness of his person and work on the other, are variously indicated in the Gospels. The attempt had evidently been made to excite the jealousy and fear of Herod, to rouse him to action by representing Jesus as a dangerous political character, plotting and teaching treason.¹ The death of John was premonitory; and Jesus interpreted it as meaning that the man who did not spare the Baptist would, when his passions were roused, as little spare Him.² And so with an unfriendly people and a jealous ruler, prone to swift and cruel deeds, Galilee became to Him an uncongenial home; and He "departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon."³ It was in those days of wandering and desertion, when He had come into the region of Cæsarea Philippi, that He asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?"⁴ The answer shewed the conflict of opinion, and elicited the further question—"But whom say ye that I am?" Peter's answer—significant of what his most esoteric teaching had been, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—was hailed and ratified by the singular and suggestive words, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This remarkable response not only recognized and proclaimed the reality of his Christhood and Sonship, and faith in them as the necessary condition alike of disciple-

¹ Luke xiii. 31.² Matt. xiv. 1, 2, 13.³ Ibid. xv. 21.⁴ Ibid. xvi. 13.

ship and beatitude, but also ascribed the faith expressed in the confession to the special inspiration of God. The more perfectly the consciousness of his disciples reflected his own, the more certain was He that his Father was in them as in Him, that human apostacy only contributed to the reality of his Divine work. But while antagonism developed in Himself and his disciples this higher consciousness, it also made the dark and dread forms of the future stand out before his eye. "From that time forth he began to shew" to the men who had confessed that He was "the Christ, the Son of the living God," "how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."¹ The shadow of the cross never lifted from his soul; it saddened his spirit and deepened the meaning of his speech. His words became, as they had never been before, expository of Himself, of his relation to God and man, to death and life. And so the later is unlike the earlier teaching. He speaks less like a King proclaiming his kingdom, enforcing obedience, creating in man the sense of benevolent order and beneficent law, than like a Redeemer who redeems by death, a Deliverer who delivers by the sacrifice of Himself. And so within the apparent history He helps us to see a real Divine presence and purpose. While priests and rulers were to their own infamy and disaster plotting his death, He was preparing to make it the symbol of his truth, of his might to save.

Now here we have the point of view from which we must try to interpret his teaching as a transcript or explication of his own consciousness. His speech is

¹ Matt. xvi. 21.

the incarnation of his spirit, the mirror of his thought. His person is reflected in his words ; the worth of the one explains the worth of the other.

His words do not expound a theology—they institute a religion. This is their essential and distinctive characteristic. In the Acts and the Epistles we have a theology : the disciples explain the mission and sayings of their Master, especially in their relation to the mind and will of God, and to the state and destinies of men. But the Gospels simply record the words which reveal the consciousness of Jesus, which help us, as it were, to stand within his spirit and know the Person who created our religion as He knew Himself. And it is because his words stand in this relation to his Person that they are so creative. It is of far greater importance that we know what Jesus thought of Himself than that we know what Paul thought of Him ; what the Son knew of the Father is of diviner worth to the world than what the disciples thought concerning Him. Religion precedes theology ; every theology runs back into a religion, and every spiritual religion into a creative personality ; and so the Person and words of Jesus underlie alike the religion of Christ and the discourses and discussions of his apostles. It is more possible to interpret the theology through the religion than the religion through the theology. Paul is inexplicable without Christ, but Christ is not unintelligible without Paul. The disciple explains the Master only after the Master has explained the disciple.

We can hardly approach the words of Christ without reverence. As we study them we almost feel as if we were overhearing his speech, or looking into his spirit, or watching the ebb and flow of emotion on his

wondrous face. Theologians of a certain school have almost resented the attempt to present Christ the Teacher, as if it were better for Christian thought to be busied with his work than with his words. But what without his teaching would his Person and death signify? Are they not mutually necessary, reciprocally explicative? Would not his teaching be aimless without his death? Does not his death grow luminous only as He Himself is made its interpreter? His words have been a sort of infinite wonder to the world, a kind of Divine heart and conscience to it. They are but few; we can read in an hour all of his thought that survives in the forms human art has created to clothe and immortalize the human spirit. Nor was He careful to preserve them, wrote no word, commanded no word to be written; spoke, as it were, into the listening air the words it was to hear and preserve for all time. And the speech thus spoken into the air has been like a sweet and subtle Divine essence in the heart of humanity. If we imagine a handful of sweet spices cast into the ocean subduing its salt and brackish bitterness, and making it for evermore pleasant to the taste; or a handful of fragrance thrown into the air spreading and penetrating till it filled the atmosphere of every land, and made it healing and grateful as the breath of Paradise;—we may have an imperfect physical analogy of what Christ's words have been, and what his teaching has done for the thought and spirit of man. Had the words of any other great teacher perished; had the wisdom of Socrates, or the science of Aristotle, or the eloquence of Cicero, or the poetry of Æschylus or Sophocles been lost, our world had still been little different from what it is to-day. But had the words of Christ vanished into silence, passed

into the great halls of oblivion, or had they never been spoken, our world had been quite other than it is, and been far from as wise and good as it is now. So great and infinite in value have been those teachings, in quantity smallest of fragments, in quality greatest and most priceless of the treasures that have enriched the world.

In proceeding to details, we had better start with Christ's teaching as regards Himself. Here our first duty must be to interpret the two descriptive titles, "Son of man" and "Son of God."

I. "Son of man." This title is in the New Testament significantly enough used, with one exception, by Christ alone. The exception occurs in the speech of Stephen, in the very last words he is allowed to utter. "Behold," he cries, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."¹ The position is remarkable and significant, expresses dignity, dominion, authority. And these are ideas that are usually associated with the title, and that it was manifestly intended to connote. Thus it is said, the Father "hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man."² In one of the great eschatological discourses we read, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;" and He is to be seen "coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."³ The pre-eminent dignity the title is meant to express is evident from the text where it first occurs: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."⁴ The force of the passage

¹ Acts vii. 56.² John v. 27.³ Matt. xxiv. 27, 30.⁴ Ibid. viii. 20.

lies evidently in the contrast of right with fact, of ideal position with real experience. These usages place us on the line along which the explanation must be sought. The title belongs to one who possesses authority, and can execute judgment, and first appears in the later prophetic literature. Daniel says,¹ "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven." The vision is one of a cycle in which symbolical expression has been given to the essential characters of the great empires of the past and present. The symbols employed were beasts: the first, a lion with eagle's wings; the second, a bear, with ribs riven from a side in its teeth; the third, a leopard, four-winged, four-headed; the fourth, a mythical beast, "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly." The empires thus symbolized are brutal, based on mere fierce strength. When their dominion ceases, the one "like the Son of man" comes in the clouds of heaven; "and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him."² The meaning is evident: the symbols of the old empires were beasts, but the symbol of the new Divine kingdom is "the Son of man." Its character was humanity, as theirs was inhumanity; it is personified in gentle and forethoughtful reason, as they were personified in cruel and selfish force. "The Son of man" institutes a kingdom that carries out the purposes of God as to man, and realizes in humanity his reign.

The title thus emphasizes the humanity of Him who bears it, but a humanity that accomplishes a Divine work, creates and controls a society which is so finely human because so entirely a realization of the thought

¹ Dan. vii. 13.

² Ibid. vii. 14.

or mind of God as to man. Schleiermacher rightly said: "Christ would not have adopted this title had He not been conscious of a complete participation in human nature. But his use of it would have been meaningless, had He not had a right to it which other men could not possess. And consequently the meaning was a pregnant one, marking the distinctive differences between Him and other men."¹ These references shew the powers and prerogatives that belonged to the title, and the duties they involved. "The Son of man" is the bond between earth and heaven, belongs in an equal degree to both; He is the medium through which God reaches man and man reaches God.² As the One who unites and unifies earth and heaven, He is the Source of the Divine life in man, is the Light that creates, the Bread that maintains, life in the world.³ As the Creator of the new society, the Founder of the Divine kingdom, He has the right to repeal whatever impedes its progress, to modify or adapt to its service⁴ old institutions like the Sabbath. He must, too, exercise rule, see that his citizens are worthy of his city.⁵ If to exercise authority be his right, to obey is man's duty; and confession becomes the subjects of the King.⁶ But these powers and prerogatives are rooted in sacrifice. Without death, without resurrection, "the Son of man" cannot fulfil his mission, carry through his Divine work.⁷ He suffers that He may save; by death He gives his life a ransom for the many.⁸

The title, so often and so emphatically used, enables us to see what Christ conceived Himself to be, and

¹ *Glaubenslehre*, ii. 91, third edition.

² John i. 51, iii. 13, vi. 62, viii. 28.

³ Ibid. vi. 53.

⁴ Matt. xii. 8.

⁵ Ibid. xiii. 41.

⁶ Ibid. xvi. 13.

⁷ Ibid. xvii. 9, 12, 22, 23, xx. 18.

⁸ Ibid. xviii. 11; Mark xiv. 21-25.

where He believed Himself to stand : He affirmed that He possessed our common human nature : He was a "*Son*." But He also affirmed his pre-eminence — "*the Son of man*." Other persons had been, or were, sons of individual men, members of particular families or nations ; but Jesus, as "*the Son of man*," was no man's son, was the Child of humanity ; belonged to no age, but to all ages ; to no family or people, but to mankind. He is, as the Divine Ideal realized, universal and everlasting, an individual who is, in a sense, humanity.

The title is in a manner translated and interpreted by Paul in the phrases, "the last Adam," "the second Man."¹ Adam failed to become what God intended him to be, was only a "living soul," did not become "a life-giving spirit." His sons were also failures, and earth, though built to be the home of humanity, had never seen humanity realized. But Christ came and realized it, appeared as the vital form of the Divine idea, the articulated image of the Divine dream. And so the "last Adam" was greater than the first, "a quickening spirit," able to vivify those that were as good as dead. Humanity was like a colossal aloe, growing slowly through many centuries, throwing out many an abortive bud, but blossoming at length into "the second Man," who remains its for ever fragrant and imperishable flower.

2. The "Son of God." This title was less common on the lips of Christ, but was frequent with the apostles, with whom it assumes a peculiar meaning, especially when qualified by *μονογενής* and *ἰδιος*. As used by Christ, it occurs only in the Fourth Gospel, and ex-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.

presses not simply a figurative, but an essential filial, relation to God. The Jews so understand it, and charge Him with blasphemy for daring to use it.¹ One passage in the first Synoptic ² shews that the use was no peculiarity of the Johannean Christ. The ideas it connotes are finely expressed in the great filial confession recorded by Matthew: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."³ The mutual knowledge is absolute: Father and Son know each other as they alone can who never were but face to face and heart to heart. The knowledge the Son possesses of the Father He possesses that He may communicate; He knows God that He may make Him known. Where his knowledge is received, his spirit is born; to know the Father as the Son knows Him, is to love as the Son loves. In the filial confession the High Priest's prayer is anticipated; the world that does not know the Father is to be brought to the knowledge of Him through the Son.⁴ And here we can see the truths that meet and blend in the titles. "The Son of God," through his essential relation to the Father, is the vehicle of true and absolute knowledge concerning Him; "the Son of man," through his essential relation with humanity, is the medium of its living union with God. The first title denotes Christ as God's mediator with man, the second denotes Him as man's mediator with God.

Christ's common use of the one title and rare use of the other was a custom beautifully true to his nature. It shews how intensely his consciousness had realized

¹ John xix. 7.² Matt. xxvii. 43.³ Ibid. xi. 27.⁴ John xvii. 25, 26.

his affinity with man, how He wished men to feel his and their community of nature. It was by his humanity that He hoped to lift and save men. The sense of our kinship with God through Christ is our regeneration.

It was a peculiar and transcendent consciousness that could be expressed in the titles "Son of God" and "Son of man;" and He who so conceived Himself shewed He had a mission worthy of his transcendent Personality. Very early He had declared his judicial authority and functions, asserted and exercised his right to forgive sins, advanced his claim to the faith and homage of Israel.¹ But these general statements could not satisfy his consciousness: truth required Him to become more specific and personal. While He is the least self-conscious of teachers, He is of all teachers the most conscious of Himself; while the least egotistical, the most concerned with his own Person. He conceives his Person to be a supreme necessity to the world: He is the Saviour of the lost; He is the Shepherd, now giving his life for the sheep, now returning with the rescued lamb in his arms. The death that is to come to Him by wicked hands cannot defeat his mission, can only help to fulfil it; it is to mark the culmination of his sacrifice: it is to be the condition and symbol of victory. The theme of Christ's later teaching was Christ, and there is no finer witness to his truth than this: while his teaching is concerned with Himself it is never selfish, remains infinitely remote from egoism, is penetrated by the sublimest universalism. To speak of Himself is the highest boon He can confer on the race, for the words that unfolded the consciousness of Divine Sonship that is in

¹ Matt. vii. 23, ix. 1-8, x. 5, ff. xi. 19-24.

Him are the only words that have been able to create a conscious Divine sonship in the race.

Round this centre the varied elements of his teaching beautifully crystallize. Out of his twofold relation, to God and man, springs what He has to say of both. The Son who is in the bosom of the Father declares Him, shews Him mindful of sinful man, seeking him, receiving him with a weeping joy that makes all heaven glad. The "Son of man" reveals man to himself, shews the transcendent worth of the soul He loves to save, makes man conscious of the infinite possibilities of good within him, of the Divine affinities that sleep in his nature. The Person that manifests the Divine and the human in beautiful and holy unity fitly shews how God and man can sweetly meet, and rejoice in each other with exceeding great joy. He who is, as it were, our virtues incorporated, is the fit teacher of duty, a voice gentle where most authoritative, making its most imperative commands as sweet as reasonable. And so person and word combine to bring round the fulfilment of his grand prayer: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."¹

A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

THE PRODIGAL AND HIS BROTHER.

ST. LUKE XV. 11-32.

There are, I suppose, very few readers of the New Testament who have not wished at times that this parable had closed with Verse 24, and left us rejoicing in the joy of the father over his regained and penitent

¹ John xvii. 21.

son. The second part of the parable seems to jar with the first. The "elder brother" is a mere discord in its music, and robs it of its natural and happy close. We could very cheerfully dispense with him. We do virtually dispense with him by naming the parable the Parable of the Prodigal Son, as though there were only one son in it, and not two. The prudent and thrifty brother, always in his father's house, but with so little of his father's spirit, only perplexes and distresses us. We cannot tell what to make of him. We feel that the story would have gained in unity and force if he had been left out of it.

And the commentators are no less perplexed, though they are less free to confess it. They have invented countless theories to explain him—I have myself invented one or two; but, as any one may see who can read between the lines, they are satisfied with none of them, not even their own. The man remains an enigma to this day, raising many questions to which we cannot reply. But, at last, I have an interpretation of him to propose which I am disposed to think is the true interpretation, in part because it is so simple that I wonder how, at least so far as I have read, it should have been missed so long; and, in part, because it is only a modification, only an extension or amplification, of the oldest interpretation of all, and that which has found the widest acceptance.

The oldest interpretation is that which sees in the Younger Son a type of the publicans and sinners, and in his Elder Brother a type of the scribes and Pharisees. It was naturally suggested by Verses 1 and 2 of the Chapter, in which we read that "all the *publicans and sinners* were drawing near to hear him," and that

"*the Pharisees and scribes* murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." We know that our Lord commonly suited his word to his audience, that He spoke what St. Peter calls "*the present truth.*" And as, on this occasion, his audience was composed of publicans and sinners on the one hand, and of Pharisees and their scribes on the other, we may well believe that the parable was specially addressed and adapted to them.

The main objection to this interpretation is, that it is not wide enough. We all feel that the story of the Younger Son is the story of humanity at large; that its scope is as wide as the world; that in him every man, Jew or Gentile, may recognize himself. And, therefore, just as we cannot consent to take him as a type of the publican only, so neither can we consent to take the elder son as a type of the Pharisee only. We feel that our Lord is dealing, not with *men*, but with *man*; not with classes or nationalities, but with the entire race: and hence we demand an interpretation of his words that shall cover all classes and include the whole family of man.

But what is to hinder us from so widening and extending the most ancient interpretation of his words as to make them cover the whole world? If the earliest commentators saw in the Younger Son a type of the publicans, why may not we see in the publicans a type of all sinful but penitent men of every race? If they saw in the Elder Brother a type of the Pharisees, why may not we see in the Pharisees a type of all who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others? Nay, more: *if we can each of us find in ourselves that which identifies us with the prodigal but*

penitent son, may we not also each one of us find in ourselves some traces of his narrow and self-righteous and unloving brother?

It is simply by thus extending the scope of the parable, and not by any more recondite process, that I believe we shall reach an interpretation of it in which we can rest. For, as in all ages and in every race, there are men who are deeply conscious of sin, so in all ages and in every race there are men who have no deep consciousness of sin, and that mainly because their sins are not of an open and flagrant kind, or because they are veiled from them by a careful observance of religious punctilios and forms. As, moreover, every man may find in himself some touch of the publican, so also every man may find in himself some touch of the Pharisee: not unfrequently, indeed, "the vilest sinner" is transformed into the hardest and narrowest "saint," and thinks all the more of himself because he has so many sins to repent and is so very conscious of them.

Suppose, then, that it were our Lord's intention to convict the self-righteous of sin as well as to assure the penitent of forgiveness; suppose, moreover, that He so held the mirror up to human nature as to shew every man a double reflection of himself in it, one in the prodigal and one in his brother, and we reach an interpretation of the parable as wide as the world, while yet it satisfies all the historical conditions under which He spake. He spoke to the publicans and the Pharisees; and in speaking to them He shewed every man the publican and the Pharisee in his own breast.

The great aim of our Lord's ministry was to convince men that they were the sons of God; or, as St. John phrases it, "to give them power to become the

sons of God ; " or, as St. Paul phrases it, " because they were sons," He sought to send forth his Spirit into their hearts, that they might look up to God, and cry, " O Father, Father ! " Now that which makes a man a son is a filial spirit. And the true son, the man who has a really filial spirit, accounts it his true freedom to obey his father, and his true happiness and reward to serve him. If we were set to define a good son, on what more essential and characteristic points could we fix than these—that his father's service was his delight ; that, on the mere prompting of love, he at all times kept his father's commandments ; and that, under all changes and temptations to distrust, he confided in his father's wisdom and care ? Loving dependence, free obedience, cheerful and affectionate service, enter into our very conception of a son, and distinguish it from our conception of a servant or a slave. The man who can say,

The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself,

has, it will be admitted, a genuinely filial spirit, and is worthy to be called a son.

In all these essential and distinctive characteristics of sonship—of which we find a perfect example only in our Lord Himself—the Prodigal was for a time frankly and glaringly deficient. So far from affectionately depending on his father's bounty and love, he claimed what he called "*his own* portion of goods," that he might expend it as he would. So far from rendering his father a free and willing obedience, he felt that he should never be free until he had escaped from his father's control. So far from taking delight in service, and finding no place so dear as home and no society

so congenial as that of the inmates of his home, he was persuaded that he should never taste real pleasure till he could break away from the restraints of his father's service and follow the impulses of his own will.

Here, then, we have the open and jovial sinner depicted to the very life. The Younger Son is animated by the very motives and bent on the very same course which still exert a pernicious attraction on young men who want what they call their "fling," and do not reflect how much they may fling away. They have so little of the filial spirit in them, that they hate to be dependent whether on their earthly father or their Father in heaven, and to submit to his control. It is *independence* which they crave, not dependence.—forgetting that no man can be independent even of his fellows, much less of God ; and that, if a man must be dependent, it is at least better to depend on those who love him than on those who are indifferent to his welfare. And so, many a young fellow, thinking himself very brave and manly all the while, gives up home, gives up God, to become the slave, first, of his own foolish passions, and, then, of an alien and inimical power which exacts hard service of him, and, as likely as not, leaves him to starve in it.

Like the Prodigal, too, they look for freedom, not in obedience, but in disobedience, to the commands which yet express the wisdom of God and are confirmed by the universal experience of man. Forgetting that

As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope by its immoderate use
Turns to restraint,

they give such immoderate scope to their cravings and lusts, that they soon find themselves reduced to want and bondage.

And, once more like the Younger Son, they so misconceive of happiness as to assume that they can reach it only through transgression, only by breaking the laws of health and social well-being, although every such transgression inevitably brings its own penalty with it, and these penalties accumulate so rapidly that their life is soon all crossed and vexed with loss and pain.

In short, they forget that a son is never so rich as when he possesses his father's love, never so free and happy as when he is lord of his father's heart and in sympathy with his father's aims. And so they are ill at ease even in their father's house; his yoke is too hard for their unfilial spirit, his burden is too heavy; and to escape them, they rush out into the world, to assume the hardest of all yokes and a burden which no man was ever yet able to bear.

But is the Elder Son, who thinks so ill of his brother and so well of himself, in any way a better son? Does he shew a more filial spirit? Not a whit. For he who "shuts out love" is himself "from love shut out." Apply to him the tests we have just applied to the Prodigal, and the result is no less decisive. Loving dependence, free obedience, glad and disinterested service, are the distinctive marks of sonship. Has *he* these marks? Not one of them. On his own shewing, he is a servant rather than a son; his father is much more a master to him than a father. He dislikes the constraints to which he has submitted at least as much as the Prodigal who would not submit to them. His obedience is not free, but servile. His service is not willing and glad. So far from being able to say, "The service and the loyalty I owe, in

doing it, pays itself," he shews that he has been serving for wages, for reward, by complaining that his wages have been calculated on far too low a scale, that he has earned far more than he has received.

If we run through the narrative, in so far as he appears in it, we see that every stroke, however minute, tells against him—against *him*, and therefore against the Pharisees who stood listening to the parable. When we first meet him, he is returning from the field. As he draws nigh to the house, he sees that it is all astir with the signs of an unwonted festivity. What would have been the natural course of a dutiful and loving son? Surely, to go straight in, and speak with his father, that he might share and enhance his father's joy. But he—he stands without, as though he were a stranger. Instead of hastening to speak with his father, he calls one of the servants, and confers with him. He is not *at home* even in his father's house, and falls at once into an unfilial attitude of suspicion and inquiry. Himself a servant at heart, he is more at his ease with a hired servant than with the father whose love was nothing to him, though his commands were much. So little is he in harmony with his father, that, when he has heard what the servant has to tell, he is "angry," angry with his father, and will not go into the house in which he is a stranger rather than a son. His father has to come out and entreat him—as Christ was at that moment entreating the self-righteous Pharisees, and pleading with them the cause of the publicans and sinners. He even lets him entreat in vain, as the Pharisees let Christ entreat in vain. His anger against his father flashes out in the words, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee"—

calculating the term of his service, and finding it very long—"and never at any time transgressed I thy commandments:" no, and never at any time has he done more than keep a commandment. He has

moved only in command,
Nothing in love.

And, as if to put his servile and mercenary spirit beyond all doubt, he adds the reproach, "Yet thou never gavest me a kid, much less a calf, that I might make merry with my friends."

When the filial spirit came back to him, the Younger Brother had proposed to say to his father words he could not utter when he saw his father's face. With his father's arms about his neck, and his father's kisses upon his cheek, he could not say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants:" *that* would have been a sin against love. But this Elder Brother proclaims himself a mere servant, a *hired* servant, in every word he utters, and even complains that his master has not treated him well. If the Prodigal had once demanded his portion, and set up an interest separate from his father's, what else is his brother doing now? Does not *he* assert that what is his father's is not his, and shew that he too had been longing for a separate portion and a separate enjoyment? If the Prodigal had mistaken license for liberty, does not the Elder Son now prove himself *his very brother*, by speaking of duty as though it were a task, and of riotous living as though it were a pleasure, the charm of which he felt, though, for selfish ends, he had long resisted it?

Obviously, then, the Elder Son was as far away from the father's heart and spirit as the Younger Son had

ever been from his father's house, and had sunk into a bondage from which it was still harder to redeem him.

And to the Pharisees, who were accustomed to interpret parables and dark sayings, and who, no doubt, perceived that Christ spake of them, it must have been strange beyond all telling to learn that they were as far from God, and even farther from Him, than the "sinners" whom they despised. They, too, had just murmured (Verse 2) at Christ's revelation of the love of God, of a love that could stoop to sinners; and their murmurs were the proof that they themselves "moved only in command, nothing in love;" that they had not received the Spirit whereby alone men can look up to God, and cry, "Father, Father!" *They* were as servants who served only for reward. *They* were not at home in their Father's house, but stood outside, conferring with his servant Moses, or even with the rabbis rather than the prophets—the *hired* servants rather than the servants born in the house—instead of speaking with Him face to face. *They* were angry that grace should be shewn to sinners, and grudged them a joy which yet they themselves, not conscious of sin, and therefore not conscious of forgiveness, could not possibly feel. Boasting that they had never transgressed the commandments of God, their very boast confuted them; for it proved that they had violated the very condition of sonship, by cherishing a servile and unloving spirit. The complaint that God was now shewing a tenderness to sinners denied to *them*, did but prove how far they were from any apprehension of the truth that sons abide ever in the great Father's house, and that all He has is theirs.

And what was true of the Pharisees is true of the self-righteous in every age and land. Their dependence on God is not of love, but of need. Their obedience is not free, but servile. Their service is mercenary, not disinterested—rendered for a wage, not its own exceeding great reward. *They* conceive of sin as pleasant, and of virtue as toilsome. They count up their self-denials, and expect to be well paid for them. The kingdom of God is outside them, not within them. If it were not for heaven and hell, it is doubtful if they would not be as other men, and even as that publican. Many of them *are* as he is, and worse. For, under the mask of devotion, they hide a cold selfishness and a refined self-indulgence more hardening and deteriorating and alienating than grosser sins, and which even the grace of God can very hardly penetrate. We all know men whose religion is mainly a thing of creeds and forms which hardly touch their daily life and conduct at a single point; whose very morality is a self-restraint animated, not by the love of God and man, but by a fear of exposure, disgrace, loss, hell; and whose hearts are more cold and bitter than those of the outcasts whom they condemn. And only too easily, every time we look at our spiritual face in the glass, we may all know *one* man in whom at least the germs and rudiments of the Pharisaic character may be recognized without any very searching or protracted inspection.

We must remember, then, that in this parable we have the story of *two* prodigals, rather than of one; of two men, that is, who wandered away from God, who lost their standing as sons by losing the spirit of sons; and that the self-righteous censor of his brother, the cold and insolent critic of his Father, although he had

never left his home, had strayed even farther from God than the reckless prodigal who, under all his sins and sinful impulses, had a son's heart in him, and was at last drawn back by it to his Father's arms. We must remember that we ourselves may be far less like sons of God than the "sinners" for whom we have little hope, because little sympathy. For it seems to have been the intention of Christ, in uttering this parable, to teach us that those who esteem themselves "saints," because they busy themselves with religious dogmas and rules, may be as deeply alienated from God, as lacking in dependence and obedience and service, as mistaken in their conception of freedom and happiness—that they may even be made of harder and more impenetrable stuff than the transgressors whom they eye with sour suspicion and disdain. "The daw is not a religious bird because it keeps caw-cawing from the steeple ;" and the Pharisee is not a religious man because he goes regularly to church and is immaculate in all the orthodoxies and observances of his sect.

But the parable teaches us a lesson still more surprising than this. For it teaches us that, let men be as bad as they may, and whether they shew a wild, wilful, and wanton spirit, or a cautious, selfish, and mercenary spirit, whether they are the slaves of impulse or of conventionalism, God is always a good Father to them all. If one intention of the parable be to set forth the various ways in which men fall short of the filial spirit and power, its other and greater intention is to shew that God is never wanting in the paternal spirit. How often have we been touched to the very heart by the Father's grace to the returning prodigal, and felt that none but Christ, who was Him-

self "the Friend of publicans and sinners," would have dared to conceive of a God so tender and fatherly, so full of compassion and lovingkindness! And how often, as we have read on, have we been surprised—and even perhaps a little vexed and sorry—to find the Father just as tender and forgiving to his hard, self-righteous, and unloving son! Which of us has not grudged, or at least been perplexed by, the love shewn to *him*? We are charmed, enchanted, as we hear that when the Younger Son was yet a great way off, "his father ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." But when we come to that far more difficult, and therefore far more noble, outburst of love, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine," we feel somehow as if a wrong note had been touched, as if the Father were a great deal too good to his surly self-complacent child. And yet, why should we feel like that? how can we dare to feel like that? Is not, here at least, the "saint" by far the greater "sinner" of the two, and therefore in greater need of love and compassion? If we every one of us have some sense of sin, and therefore identify ourselves with the Penitent, and rejoice in the grace shewn to him, have we not also every one of us some taint of self-righteousness and self-complacency which should lead us to identify ourselves with the servile and impenitent Formalist, and to be glad that even for him there was a place in the Father's heart?

The truth is that we may each one of us only too easily find both these men, both these brothers, in himself. And, therefore, God's grace to the one should be as welcome and as pathetic as his grace to the other. As there is some hope that even the Pharisee may become a penitent, so there is much danger that even

the penitent may become a Pharisee ; that when he is "converted" he may become as narrow and hard and bigoted as ever his brother was, and sit in judgment and condemn those who were "in Christ" long before he was, and who have done far more to serve Him ?

Yes, this Elder Brother's blood runs in all our veins no less than that of the Younger. And we may well rejoice, therefore, that our Father in heaven is good to both,—most tender to us when we confess our sins, and no less tender when we convert our very righteousness into a sin ; that when we return to Him, He has compassion on us ; and that even when we are angry with Him, and will not go in, He is not angry with us, but comes out and entreats us, rekindling a filial and fraternal spirit in us by his fatherly generosity and love.

S. E. C. T.

PARDON AND PUNISHMENT.

PSALM xcix. 8 ; ISAIAH xliii. 25-28.

THE idea of the forgiveness of sin, and the idea of the punishment of sin, are generally thought to be contradictory and inconsistent. The ordinary idea of forgiveness is, that it is a remission of the penalty of sin ; and if that be the true conception, it certainly makes the idea of punishment impossible. But there are many passages in the Old Testament, no less than the New, in which the two thoughts of Pardon and Punishment are closely conjoined. Such, for example, are the two passages cited above, in the latter of which, indeed, we have the most absolute declaration of forgiveness, and then, immediately following, a recital of the punishment which Jehovah had inflicted upon the Jews in their

exile and captivity in Babylon. How are we to reconcile the two things? Is not the blotting out of sin incompatible with the punishment of it? Or is there any way of reconciling the two statements, any way in which they can be brought together, so that we can say: God does most absolutely and truly blot out and forget our sins; and He does also most absolutely and truly punish us for our sins? Are forgiveness and punishment irreconcilable ideas? Is the love of God in eternal opposition to the justice of God, or are they different aspects of the same transcendent fact in the Divine Nature?

When an earthly child has sinned against his earthly father, and the father promises forgiveness, two things are included in the promise. One is, that the father will not continue to be angry, but will regard his son with the same tender feeling as he had towards him before the wrong was done: *i.e.*, he will forgive him in feeling, and forget the offence as if it had not been committed. The other is, that he will not punish him for his misdeed, but let him go free, as if he had not been guilty of wrong. These are the two elements of forgiveness as it is understood between two human beings. But does the son escape punishment altogether because his father has been generous enough to let him go free? Of course he escapes outward penalty, which the father has remitted: but he does not escape the inward penalty of shame and self-condemnation, if he has any conscience or right feeling; in fact, his self-reproach and self-judgment will be all the stronger for the very reason that he has escaped the outward infliction, for in that case he would have felt that he had made some expiation of his sin.

And this brings out the difference, deep and radical, between Divine and human forgiveness. God is not angry in the sense in which our earthly father is angry ; and when it is said in Scripture that He is "angry every day," it does not mean the anger of passion or resentment ; and when it is said that He is reconciled to us, it is not that there has been a rupture of good feeling between us on his part, and that the rupture is healed. As far as we can understand the mystery of the Divine Nature, God's feeling towards the worst and the wickedest of his children is an eternal unclouded affection ; and when we have sinned our utmost and worst, his feeling towards us is pity, not anger in our sense of the word, a wounded sympathy, and a grieved, but not an alienated, affection. When God, therefore, forgives, there is no putting away, as in the case of an earthly father, of passionate angry feeling, and a return to the ordinary parental tenderness. This is one difference between forgiveness in man and forgiveness in God.

The other is, that, whereas the earthly father forbears to punish the offending child, the heavenly Father always and invariably inflicts the punishment. The punishment of transgression is not with God a matter that has been reserved for determination in each individual case, it is not a matter that has been reserved for choice, or will, or caprice : it has been provided for and settled in the very constitution of the universe, provided for by a law which has been written into the very constitution of our own nature, engraved on tablets more enduring than brass, the tablets of our imperishable spiritual consciousness. St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, while admitting that the

Gentiles have no written or outward Divine law, affirms that they are a law unto themselves ; and that, if they do by nature the things contained in the outward law, this shews the work of the law written in their hearts ; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing or excusing them. The law, the Divine law of right and wrong, is written therefore and published in each man's own bosom ; and when the law of right has been broken, it avenges itself on the transgressor upon the spot, often immediately, and the penalties of the broken law are as certain as the existence of the law itself. This is God's method of punishment, one that He never interferes with, and one that he never suspends or abolishes. Let a man of ordinary conscience commit a morally unclean act, and misery more or less acute will certainly follow—the misery of self-reproach and self-condemnation. And more than misery. He has not only defiled, he has also weakened himself, and given future temptations of the same kind a strength which they had not in the past. The man who defrauds his neighbour in any transaction may make a profitable bargain for the moment ; but if he have not already hardened his conscience against all pain or pleasure, he will both stain and corrupt his enjoyment of his gain, and make himself a worse and weaker man than he was before. The punishment of Judas began as soon as the act of betrayal was completed, and he would fain have cancelled the bargain had that been possible. The great master of human nature, Shakespeare, shews that the murderer, such as Clarence or Macbeth, suffers a more dreadful penalty than the block or the scaffold could inflict ; he peoples the whole air with the spectres of his own horrified imagination,

and his dreams and his waking hours are alike tormented with the jibbering ghosts of his victims. Retribution is the law of existence; and we can no more burn our fingers without pain than we can transgress the law of the spirit without misery and degradation.

If, then, God always punishes transgression, what becomes of the doctrine of forgiveness? If He is a God of such justice, how can He also be a God of infinite mercy? The two things are put together in the passages I have cited, forgiveness and punishment, indicating that there is no opposition between them, but that they are only two aspects of what are substantially related, not opposite, facts. For the Bible never talks of taking away the consequences, the punishment, of sin, as something distinct from the sin itself, as we often talk in modern times. The Bible regards sin and its consequence—punishment—as so bound up together that they cannot be separated, as such an insoluble compound, that we cannot take one away and leave the other. It is impossible to abolish the penalty of sin, and leave the sin behind; if the penalty is remitted, the sin itself is destroyed: if one goes, the other goes too. “May one be pardoned and retain the offence?” asks the guilty king in “Hamlet,” his moral sense not altogether bewildered by his crimes. When the Prophet reports Jehovah as saying to the Jewish captives, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins,” there is nothing in this declaration about taking away merely the punishment of their sins; it is the blotting out of the transgressions themselves, the taking away the sins themselves, so that they should perish out of the Divine memory. If the sins had re-

mained, though the punishment had been in some way remitted, God could not have ceased to remember them, for they would have been ever before his eyes. The figure of the "blotting out" of sin is often used in the Bible, and is a very expressive one. It means the cleansing out of a stain so that it disappears, the obliterating of a mark so that it is seen no more, and passes out of the memory. When, therefore, God says that "he blotteth out the transgressions of his people, and will remember them no more," we must understand that He will cleanse them from the stain of their sins, so that they shall become things of the past, obliterated from consciousness and memory ; because, when the sins have been taken away, then the consequences, or punishment, will pass away too.

In a similar manner Christ is said, in the New Testament, to bear our sins, to take away our sins, to cleanse us from our sins ; not to bear, or take away, or cleanse us from, the penalties of our sins. He bore our sins in Gethsemane and on the cross—not the punishment, but the sins themselves. If the punishment of sin is the shame of self-reproach, the misery of self-condemnation, and the weakening and deterioration of the moral nature, these consequences of sin are all our own, and cannot for a moment be thought of in connection with Christ ; except that He had and has an infinite sympathy with us when we have to suffer these consequences of our sins, and did, 'and still does, in that sense, bear them with us. The grandeur of his mission was that He came to save us from sin, and the efficiency of the shedding of his blood is that it cleanses us from all sin. As the Lamb of God, He taketh away the sin of the world ; and He saves us from the pun-

ishment of sin by first saving us from the sin which is the cause of it. The apostle who is the great argumentative theologian of the New Testament puts this truth before us in many forms. He says that we are made alive unto God through Christ; that sin dies in virtue of our faith in Christ and our union with Him; that if a man is in Christ he is a new creature; that a man is justified, or made righteous, by a faith in Christ which gives him the power to obey his will. The Apostle John says, "He that *doeth* righteousness is righteous." There is no hint anywhere of a salvation from punishment while the sin remains. When the sin is removed, the punishment of sin vanishes with it. And because we are never completely free from sin in this life, we are never completely free from punishment. We suffer, more or less, for the past and the present, while we are in this world.

We are now able, I think, to see how God blots out sins and yet punishes them; how He can be a God of love and justice at the same time without any contradiction in his nature. *Punishment is a part of the means He employs to blot out our transgressions*; it is one of his instruments for bringing us to repentance. I say *one* of his means; not the only, nor the most effectual, but one of the necessary inevitable instruments in the working out of our salvation.

Punishment is the work of love as much as any other part of God's redemptive work. It is love inflicting pain, pain that is corrective and curative. It is love unveiling to us the hidden intrinsic qualities of evil, and compelling us to see and feel them in the light of an intense and bitter personal experience. We are mercifully made to feel the pangs of remorse and

shame and self-condemnation, because by no other means could we be brought to know for ourselves the exceeding sinfulness of sin. If we were only told by an outward law that sin, which is often so sweet and intoxicating at the time, was a rebellion against the Divine Will, an evil and bitter thing which we were to shun, which bore the stigma of the displeasure of God and did harm in the universe, we might listen, or we might give no heed, to the announcement ; but when God illustrates for us the evil nature of all wrong-doing by unfolding its consequences in our own bosom and to our own experience, He compels us to think, and perchance to repent. When it is made out with all the power of an overwhelming demonstration that sin against God or man racks the whole frame of the soul with pain and sorrow ; that it blinds and deadens our nobler nature ; that, if not stopped, it will lead on to an unutterable agony and the destruction of our spiritual senses and faculties ; an appeal is made to our thought and experience which is calculated to arrest, and which ought to arrest, the career of the most desperate profligate, and compel him to pause and consider his ways. If a man can but be brought to ponder on his evil courses, and to anticipate their full consequences ; if he can be brought by painful consideration face to face with the full display of his guilt and folly, and to realize the utter misery of his impenitent state, there is then some hope of his repentance and salvation. The Prodigal Son, we are told, “came to himself” in the far-off land ; and he came to himself when he began to realize the full consequences of his former recklessness, his degrading servitude, the hunger which the husks could not satisfy, his utter poverty and destitu-

tion which no one had pity on. His true and real self then came back to him, and brought with it the happy inspiration of repentance and return. From that moment his sin began to be blotted out and forgotten, because the spirit of the son had begun to supplant the spirit of the prodigal. When God declared to the captive Jews in Babylon that He blotted out their transgressions, He was doing more than remitting the punishment by restoring them to their own land. He was destroying that spirit of idolatry in them which had formerly been their great national sin; for from henceforth the Jews ceased from being an idolatrous people, and their exile had played the greatest part in shewing them the absurdity and guilt of idolatry. Call it justice, if you please, which joins punishment and sin; but the truer and more appropriate name is Love.

God forgives a man when He destroys his sin and blots out his transgression. But punishment is only a part of the agency He employs towards this end, and is not of itself sufficient to bring about a deep and lasting repentance. Men for the most part cannot see God's *love* in their sufferings and chastisements, although that doctrine is so emphatically set forth in Holy Writ; but only his anger. And hence, if the work of blotting out sin is to be wide and general, some grand agency of manifest undeniable Love must lead the way and occupy the foremost place. Men cannot be driven into goodness and righteousness, even by Divine law and the punishments it inflicts; but they can be drawn by the almighty attractions of Love revealed in the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ. How to overcome the power of sin in the human heart, and how to implant the spirit of a Divine freedom, so

as to drive out the spirit of license which brought in sin, was the problem which Divine Wisdom had to solve. And the Apostle Paul tells us how it has been solved. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, or on account of sin, condemning sin in the flesh"—"flesh" here meaning human nature. Christ is God's power for human recovery and salvation. Not our own sufferings for sin, however severe and protracted, are powerful enough to overthrow the dominion of sin, though they have a part to play; but the sufferings of Christ reflecting, as they do, the infinite compassion of God, can dissolve the fatal spell that is upon us. These shew to us that the path of repentance is wide open for him that has wandered farthest from home; that God will not only not refuse the returning penitent, but will go out to meet him while yet a great way off, and cast his embracing arms about him, in token of the welcome which He and all heaven will give.

CHARLES SHORT.

BRIEF NOTICES.

Professor Cremer has put every Biblical scholar under obligation by his well-known BIBLICO-THEOLOGICAL LEXICON OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK. By his new and enlarged edition he has more than doubled that obligation, for he has now given us a long and elaborate essay on each of the characteristic words of the New Testament, noting the changes it has undergone as it passed from Classical to Christian use, and the several senses in which it has been employed since it was pressed into the service of the Church. The new edition contains twice as much matter as the old, and if the matter is not twice as good, it is at least very much improved. Mr. Urwick has translated the new edition (he and Dr. Simon were the translators of

the first) very carefully—an immense labour; and the publishers, Messrs. T. and T. Clark of Edinburgh, have greatly added to the comfort and pleasure with which the book will be used, by the handsome form they have given it: it is a noble quarto, printed in bold clear type, with broad margins that positively invite the inevitable annotations. Of course even yet the work is not perfect. Had Professor Cremer, for example, read the paper of De Quincey's on *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*, which lately appeared or reappeared in *THE EXPOSITOR*, he would have seen cause to modify his treatment of the word. But the great drawback, the only considerable drawback, to this valuable work, is that Professor Cremer's theology is somewhat narrow and technical, and that now and then his theological prepossessions render him insensible to the finer and larger meanings of the words of Scripture. Nevertheless his *Lexicon* is, and is long likely to be, indispensable to students whether of theology or of the Bible, and must always bear witness to his scholarship, erudition, and diligence.

THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS continues its useful course, and fairly maintains its level on the whole. Two new volumes have appeared since we last spoke of it here; one on 1 Corinthians, by *Professor Lias*, the other on Jonah, by *Archdeacon Perowne*. Professor Lias has done his work like a workman, and has given us a capital exposition of his Epistle. The venerable Archdeacon has had a more difficult task, and has succeeded in it as well as could be expected, although his handling of the "fish" leaves something to be desired. His conclusion is that "on the whole it is most likely that Jonah's fish was a shark," the white shark of the Mediterranean. It should be remembered, however, that this miracle of the fish presents what is probably the most difficult problem of the Old Testament, and that a solution of it can hardly be looked for in a commentary designed for the use of schools. EDITOR.

THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT.

THERE are some writers whose works have little or no individuality about them, whose writings have no personal stamp that marks them as their own. Others there are whose literary offspring are at once recognizable by their likeness to their author, whose works faithfully reflect their strength or their weakness, their habits of mind, their personal feelings ; so that we feel as if we had known the author and lived with him. Of this latter sort is St. Paul, of whom we may say that we learn to know him from his writings, and then understand his writings by our knowledge of him. Luther says of him that his words are not dead things, but living creatures, having hands and feet ; meaning, doubtless, that, by the fulness of life and force with which they were charged, they became capable of growth, of acquiring new meanings, of adapting themselves to a wider significance than that which originally pertained to them.

And especially in certain pairs of words, which the great Apostle habitually joins together by way of contrast, we may trace the marks of the tremendous spiritual convulsion which he had experienced. When he had been brought out of darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God—when old things passed away, and all things became new—when the things that had been gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ—

he must have felt that his life had been cut into two parts, and that a great gulf was fixed between them. And so he came to identify with the first part of his life the law—the system of ordinances in which he had lived till the great light shone round about him on the road to Damascus; and, with the second part, the gospel—the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free. Accordingly, all his conceptions grouped themselves around these two parts of his life; and so he spoke of the law and grace, of faith and works, of the flesh and the spirit, of the letter and the spirit, of darkness and light, not always with direct and conscious, but always with some explicit or implicit, reference to the two opposite systems by which, in the two periods of his life, he had been dominated. And the after history of some at least of these words would form an instructive chapter in the history of theology. Faith and works—coins first issued fresh from St. Paul's mint—how have these been rubbed and worn as they have passed current through various theological schools, until at last the Apostle's image and superscription have almost become unrecognizable. Indeed, it has been well pointed out by Archbishop Whately, that there is an advantage in using non-scriptural terms for theological purposes, because then the scriptural words remain in their own proper sense, and do not come down to us with accumulated theological associations.

But to confine ourselves for the present to the words which I propose to discuss in the present paper, Letter and Spirit. The Greek word for *letter* (γράμμα) is used by St. Paul with various shades of meaning. In Galatians vi. 11, for the characters in which he writes: "Ye see in what great letters (πηλικοῖς γράμμασιν) I have

written to you :” in 2 Timothy iii. 15, for the writings of the Old Covenant, “the holy writings” (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα) : in Romans ii., of the written law possessed by the Jews, as opposed to the natural law by which the virtuous heathen were guided : “The uncircumcision which is by nature, that fulfils the law, shall judge thee who, with the letter and circumcision (διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς—surrounded by, in the midst of, the written law and the ordinances), dost transgress the law ;” and (περιτομὴ καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι) “the circumcision of the heart is in the spirit, not in the letter.” So, again, in Romans vii. 6, he speaks of Christians as being bound to serve God “in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος).” And in 2 Corinthians iii., where he is speaking of the openness of apostolical service, and of the Corinthians being “the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God ; not on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart,” he adds : “It is God that made us sufficient to be servants of a new covenant—a covenant not of writing, but of spirit (οὐ γράμματος ἀλλὰ πνεύματος) : for the writing, the written thing (γράμμα) killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” And immediately afterwards he contrasts the service of ministration of death in writing (ἐν γράμματι) engraven on stones, the ministration of condemnation, with the ministration of the spirit, the ministration of righteousness.

We see, then, how in his use of this word γράμμα, St. Paul rises from the mere written characters to the thing written, as the Hebrew Scriptures, and thence to the covenant or system which consists in a written law ; and so he comes to use it in opposition to the spirit—

the dead, unchangeable, inflexible thing written, as opposed to the living, changing, life-giving spirit, until at last he declares that the written thing, the letter, kills, but the spirit gives life. And from this it is easy to trace how the letter, the thing written, comes to mean the unchanging, fixed, hard law, which is the same always, and for all men; while the spirit, the breath, which bloweth where it listeth, and none can tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, comes to signify the inner meaning, the principle, the ever-varying self-adapting soul which underlies and animates the letter. And thus the literal meaning of a law or a statement is often opposed to its spirit; literal obedience is opposed to conformity to the spirit of the law; a literal translation is opposed to rendering the spirit of an author. So Jeremy Taylor, in his "Holy Living," says, "We must obey the letter of a law, without doing violence to the reason of the law, or the intention of the lawgiver."

As, then, we owe to our Lord's Parable of the Talents the word "talent," to signify a gift of intellect entrusted to a man to be used, so to St. Paul's use of *γράμμα* and *πνεῦμα* we owe the terms "letter" and "spirit," to denote the dead rule or law and the inner purpose and principle which animates it. And we may remark, in passing, the contrast between the Biblical use of *λόγος*—the word spoken or unspoken, and *γράμμα*—the written document. While "the letter" kills, "the word" of God is living and working (Heb. iv. 12: *ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐνεργής*). The "word" of God lives and abides for ever¹ (1 Pet. i. 23: *διὰ λόγου*

¹ I assume that the participles refer to *λόγου*, and not to *θεοῦ*, for reasons set forth by Alford, De Wette, &c.

ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος). Nay, the spoken words (John vi. 63 : here ῥήματα, not λόγος) *are* spirit and life. So that when, in theological language, we speak of the *written word*, we are using language which is certainly not scriptural, and which seems not very far from a contradiction of Scripture. The letter killeth — St. Paul said it of the Old Covenant, but it holds good no less of the New—the letter, so far as it is merely letter, killeth, but the Spirit is the giver of life.

We go on to discuss, first, how St. Paul came to say of the Old Law, that the letter killeth.

When Moses came down from the mount with the two tables of the testimony in his hand, we are told that the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. Here then was a letter which, if any ever did, demanded the most awful and reverential treatment. But when Moses found that the people had made a calf, and were worshipping it, “Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them there before the mount.” Of the second tables we are told that Moses himself hewed them at the command of God, and that he wrote the ten commandments upon them at the dictation of Jehovah. These, then, would be far less intrinsically sacred (if sacredness can inhere in any material thing) than the first; yet even these were deemed worthy of being placed by themselves in the Ark of the Covenant, which stood between the cherubim in the Holy of Holies, as the visible symbol of the Divine Presence. But in the darkness which settled on the Chosen People in later days, both the ark and the tables of the law disappear. We know nothing as to how they perished, only we read in the Second

Book of Esdras, "The light of our candlestick is put out, the ark of our covenant is spoiled;" so that, whatever date is assigned to the book, and it is apparently later than the Christian era, it is at least evident that, according to Jewish tradition, the sacred tables, the very visible testimony of God's favour, which had been graven in the awful presence of Jehovah, had fallen into the hands of the unbelieving heathen. Surely here, in the destruction of the first tables, "the work of God," by Moses, and in the desecration of the second by impious hands, was warning enough to the Jewish people that no text, however venerable, no "letter," however sacred, was of any value except for the sake of the revelation which it contained. And yet, throughout the whole later history of the people, after the tendency to worship other gods, the gods of the nations round about, had been crushed and burnt out of them by the Captivity, we find the worship of the law, the "stupid fetish-worship of the dead letter,"¹ utterly overlying and stifling and killing the free spirit which alone could teach their hearts. This it was, to quote Canon Farrar's article just referred to, "which led to the superstitious folly of counting the letters of the law, which were said to be 815,280, the middle letter of the Pentateuch occurring in Leviticus xi. 42." The law, which was given for a witness and a revelation of God's righteousness, was degraded into a mere matter of jugglery, an inexhaustible store of charms and letters and numbers, quite unconnected with any moral or spiritual significance. And as with the text, so with the interpretation. The weightier matters of

¹ Canon Farrar, in *THE EXPOSITOR*, vol. v. p. 375.

the law—judgment, mercy, and faith—were overruled, and all their ingenuity was bent upon such questions as the fringes and colours of garments, the wicks of candles, the distance that might be walked on the Sabbath, and if there is anything more insignificant than these. And thus the letter killed the conscience; men mixed up the eternal laws of right and wrong with frivolous questions of meats and drinks, of new moons and Sabbaths: their conscience needed to be purged from dead works before they could serve the living God. The man who regards the mixing of two fabrics in a fringe, or the walking of a yard too much on the Sabbath, as—I do not say of equal importance, but—in the same category with infractions of the moral law, will very soon learn to regard them as of equal importance, and to lose all sense of sin as distinguished from breach of etiquette. “How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?” was a favourable specimen of the casuistry of the Jews when Christ came. And—we may remark parenthetically—it is one at least of the difficulties which they have to surmount who regard Jesus as the mere product of his age and surroundings, how such a character and such teaching could be evolved from the moral conditions of his day.

But when Christ came, and taught that God regards the outward act, not in itself, but simply as an outcome and evidence of the condition of the heart and will; when He declared that all the law and the prophets hang upon the great commandment of love to God and love to man; and when St. Paul taught that “he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law,” and that meat commendeth us not to God, for that the kingdom of God

is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; then surely the reign of the letter was over, and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus would make men free from the bondage in which their consciences had been held. Not so. As "new Presbyter was but old Priest writ large," so the old worship of the letter reappeared in Christendom, and the exegesis of the Fathers, though not so abjectly puerile nor so grossly superstitious as that of the Rabbis, was yet tainted by the same faults. To take but one instance, and that the greatest of the Fathers. Augustine, unequalled as he is in many respects as an interpreter, yet absolutely revels in mystical numbers and allegorical interpretations. Thus, in the *De Doctrina Christiana*, from the 40 days of our Lord's fasting he deduces all Christianity. 4 signifying *time*—as the 4 seasons of the year, the 4 parts of the day—shews that we are to fast from *temporal* things. 10, or 3+7, is God and man; 3 being the Trinity; 7, or 3+4, being man—3, the spiritual part, heart, soul, and mind; 4, the corporeal, or the 4 elements. Again, in the 153 fishes of the second miraculous draught, 1+2+3+&c., up to 17, being 153, he finds the great multitude which no man can number who shall be on the right side in the judgment, as the fishes were caught on the *right* side of the ship. Augustine, indeed, was so filled with the Spirit, the Divine life was so strong and pure in him, that these things in him do but set off by contrast the brightness of his more rational exegesis. But in Origen it sometimes seems as though the letter, the literal sense of Scripture, had vanished altogether, and the spiritual meaning of the writers was to be gained by distilling from

their writings some kind of sublimated essence, and leaving the letter for less advanced Christians. "The fundamental principle of Origen," says Quinet, "was, 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' But is it not clear that the spirit too may become too powerful, and kill the letter, and usurp its place?" Indeed, literalism, beginning in worshipping the letter, ends in destroying it. When every verse of the Bible, to quote good old Thomas Scott, is supposed to be replete with spiritual edification, men soon begin to find recondite doctrines in the simplest facts, and then to overlook the facts for the sake of the doctrines.

It is hardly possible to discuss this subject without saying something at least on the principles of the interpretation of Scripture. It is well known that Origen, reducing to a system that which other writers from Philo downwards had held unsystematically, affirmed that there is in Scripture a threefold sense—the literal, the moral, and the mystic, corresponding severally to the body, the soul, and the spirit of man. And¹ he goes so far as to assert that in some cases, as in passages where there is no moral instruction to be gained, or when something inconsistent with the highest morality seems to be asserted, the literal sense must give way altogether to the mystical. Now it is clear that St. Paul, in such a passage, for instance, as that in Galatians iv., where Ishmael and Isaac are the two covenants, does give considerable warrant to the principle of a mystical sense in Scripture; and so again does St. Matthew in his application of the passage from Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." But with regard to such passages it may at least be

¹ Cf. Hagenbach, *Dogmengeschichte*, § 33.

said that, on the strictest theory of inspiration, it would appear that the New Testament writers were under a very special Divine guidance, and that no one without such special guidance would be warranted in finding such apparently far-fetched allusions in them; while, on a less strict theory, it may be admitted that St. Paul appears to have been almost incapable of distinguishing between the literal and the figurative, and that to him the mystical seems sometimes to have been the only interpretation. The use of the Old Testament in the New is, however, far too wide a subject to be treated of incidentally: it may suffice to say that, whatever explanation we may give to the phenomena of the above-mentioned passages, it is certain that the mystical sense of Scripture is in the early Christian writers for the most part simply a license to let the imagination run wild, and that by its free use any doctrine can be found in any passage. And yet, paradoxical as it may sound, mysticism is but another form of the worship of the letter. For when it was held that every word of Scripture is the direct utterance of the Holy Spirit, it was not unnatural to infer that in even the apparently simplest passage there were hidden beneath the surface treasures of wisdom and knowledge which only the spiritual could search out; and so an excessive veneration for the letter led men to undervalue the literal sense, and to exalt the spirit to the destruction of the letter.

For us in the present day the mystical interpretation of Scripture is hardly likely to possess much attraction. Those who wish to see a favourable specimen of it will find it in the devotional commentaries of the late Isaac Williams, a writer of most devout and tender spirit, and

deeply read both in the Scriptures and in the Fathers. They will find in them many exquisite and edifying thoughts, but they will probably rise from them with the conviction that the "mystical sense" is the product of much devout imagination and ingenuity, with but little of real critical insight. Protestant interpreters, for the most part, have agreed in ignoring it: with them, the danger has been that of superstitious reverence for the letter. When the Reformation broke through the clouds which had so long hung over men's minds, and thought and inquiry awoke, the authority of the Church, on which had been based the multitudinous abuses and superstitions of mediæval Christianity, broke down at once and for ever. But then, as men's belief in Christianity as a Divine revelation happily remained unshaken, it became necessary to find some other basis on which their faith could rest securely; and such a basis was found in the infallibility of Scripture, a doctrine which had indeed been always held, but which had been overgrown and smothered by the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church. Thenceforward there was but one standard of truth and falsehood, the writings of the Old and New Covenant. And when by translation and the printing-press the Bible was brought within the reach of the mass of the people, it was natural that it should be received with deep and genuine reverence. We, indeed, who are familiar with the Bible from childhood, cannot picture to ourselves the effect which it must have produced upon those to whom it came with the freshness of a new and surprising discovery. But it was not in this age that the letter was able to overpower the spirit. When men resorted eagerly to the Bible for that instruction in righteousness which they

had sought in vain from their former teachers, they were not likely to exalt it into an idol ; it is not till the first freshness of faith has faded that religion becomes less spiritual, and, being no longer able to lift itself up to God, stops short in any lower object. It was not in the age of the Reformation, but rather in the age of the Latitudinarians, that the grosser and, so to say, more carnal views of inspiration sprang up. As long as the hearts of men responded to the spiritual teaching of the Bible, there was no need to formulate any theory of its origin and authority. Luther, though he expressed himself strongly as to the Divine authority of Scripture, yet never failed to acknowledge its human side. It was not till the later *consensus fidei* of the Lutheran Church that the doctrine was announced that " God not only caused his Word to be committed to writing by means of Moses and the prophets and apostles, but also has till now watched over and guarded that writing, that it might not be vitiated by the craft of Satan nor by any human fraud."¹ When theologians asserted the Divine authority of the Hebrew vowel-points and the divinely-guaranteed purity of the Greek of the New Testament, literalism had probably reached its extreme point.² Against such teaching a reaction was sure to come, and it appeared first in the mystical school,³ who insisted on the unprofitableness of the letter unless it was stirred into life by the living spirit ; and, afterwards, in that great rationalistic movement which has so powerfully affected the religious thought of Protestantism.

¹ " Consensus repetitus fidei Lutheranae." Quoted by Hagenbach, *Dogmengeschichte*.

² See Hagenbach, p. 556.

³ Christian Hoburg, for instance, says, " Die Schrift ist ein alt, kalt, und todt Ding, das nun eitel Pharisäer machet " (The written letter is an old, cold, dead thing, which only makes vain Pharisees).

Indeed, the party of advanced rationalism has no more powerful allies than those divines who assert the verbal inspiration of Scripture; nor is anything that Bishop Colenso has written so dangerous to a reasonable faith as the utterance of a dignitary of the Church of England from the Oxford University pulpit, that "every book, every chapter, every sentence, every word, nay—for where shall we stop?—every letter, of the Bible is the direct utterance of the Most High."

"The letter killeth." The bondage to the mere written document is destructive of that freedom which, in theology as well as in every other branch of knowledge, is essential to life. The lawyer, to whom precedents and enactments are everything, and common sense and equity are nothing;¹ the politician, who enforces a clause of an obsolete treaty to the destruction of a people's liberty; the public functionary, who cannot transact the simplest piece of business without going through all the forms which are applicable to the most complicated; the king, who will rather be scorched than have his chair drawn back by the wrong official; the theologian, with whom a single text outweighs the whole tenour of Scripture—all these are instances of the working of this principle. And in every department of life it is very easy to fall under the bondage of the letter. It is far easier to go by a rule than by a principle; to repeat a formula by heart, than to apply it to varying cases; to forgive an offending brother seven times, than to maintain a forgiving spirit. But the man who is a slave to a formula, who exalts means into ends, and thinks mint and anise and cummin as important as

¹ Compare Burke's saying, that "no man comprehends less of the majesty of the English Constitution than the *Avi Prius* lawyer, who is always dealing with technicalities and precedents."

judgment, mercy, and truth, will have none of that spiritual life and vigour, none of that elasticity of step, which belongs to those who, being led of the Spirit, are not under the law. And, in like manner, the expositor of Scripture who makes it his chief business to vindicate the accuracy of the letter in points of detail, or to reconcile the Mosaic cosmogony¹ with the conclusions of astronomical or geological science, will miss very much of that teaching of the spirit which they may gain for whom the letter is but the earthen vessel in which the spiritual treasure is conveyed. The religious teacher or the moral philosopher, who cannot rise above his own special system, or the form in which truth has presented itself to him, into a higher region, will leave no lasting impression on human thought. For in all things the Form is transient; the visible and tangible perishes and decays; only the Substance, the spiritual reality, is eternal.

It would be hard to find a better instance of this principle than in the words which our Lord spake when He brake bread and blessed it on the night before his crucifixion: "This is my body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me." On the letter, the words, of this utterance, controversy has raged for centuries. Christians have imprisoned, persecuted, put to death their fellow-Christians on account of their interpretation of them. Men have asserted

¹ Compare a sermon by Dr. Pusey, delivered at Oxford, on Sunday, November 3, 1878. "To theology, all explanations of the details of the six days of creation are indifferent. The mission of Moses was to announce the Creator to a benighted world, and that man was the work of God's hands, formed in his own likeness. . . . In what sense the word day is to be explained—whether Moses speaks of twenty-four hours or of unlimited periods, &c.—of all this and more, genuine theology says nothing, and is even jealous over herself lest she should seem to invest any physical theory with the sacredness of Divine truth."

passionately, and others have denied not less passionately, that when Christ said, "This is my body," He meant us to understand that, when his rightly-appointed ministers should in all after time take bread, and say over it the words which He then said, He would Himself be present then and there under the visible form of bread. What is the literal meaning of the words? Are they to be taken literally or in a figure? In what relation do they stand to other sayings of his? How are we to comply with the direction, "Do this"? These are the questions which men have hotly disputed, and in disputing have suffered to escape the delicate and subtle fragrance, the essence, the spirit, which was contained in them. And in this controversy the letter, the dead and unchanging form, has often destroyed the life of the great central ordinance of Christianity, and has evacuated it of its life-giving power. Not only so: but Protestants, at least, may be allowed to say that the literalism of the Mass has destroyed the life of the Communion; that what was meant for a germ of life, changing, perhaps, its outward form according to the varying circumstances and æsthetic capacities of the Christian society, has been petrified once for all into a form, a ceremony, a letter.

Or take the other great Christian sacrament. That the washing of water typifies the cleansing of the soul in the act of union with Christ—that by baptism we are buried and risen again with Christ—that as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ—these are living, fruitful, life-giving truths. But the precise metaphysical operation of baptism—whether its effect is the same on all recipients, whether it conveys any secret influence to the soul, or whether its

efficacy consists simply in bringing the baptized into contact with the life which circulates throughout the Christian body—these are controversies which may be unavoidable, but which have a deadening effect upon the soul.

Or take another ordinance—the observance of the first day of the week. It was a true instinct that led Martin Luther to say of this great Christian festival, “If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day’s sake—if anywhere any one sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall remove this encroachment on Christian liberty.” For he knew that in this case, as in others, the letter killeth; the hard, inflexible, stern commandment, the observance for the sake of the observance and not for the sake of a higher end, takes all the life out of the institution. But the essence of the observance, the principle of keeping a fixed proportion of our time sacred from our ordinary work, and using it for the highest spiritual ends—this belongs to the spirit that giveth life.

And not less is it true in the life of each several Christian that the letter killeth, while the spirit quickeneth. Forms of devotion, observances, whether ordained by the Church or invented by ourselves, outward helps to the religious life, of whatever kind, which we have found useful to us, are very apt to assert a kind of dominion over us; we think we cannot do without them; we fancy that our spiritual life depends upon them. But soon we discover that any kind of fixed unchangeable method has a tendency to kill; it makes our religion a timorous scrupulous thing; whereas the

Spirit, the free and life-giving Spirit, quickens our devotions, and sends fresh pulses of life throughout all our religious system. Not that we can do without the letter, the fixed and formal element, in our religion; the Spirit needs a body in which to dwell, a *γράμμα*, a writing, to express it; but neither in our interpretation of the Scriptures, nor yet in our religious life, must the letter be allowed to supersede the spirit, or to be exalted into a position of independent authority.

And it may be that on her power of rightly adjusting the claims of the letter and the spirit the future of the Christian Church depends. For modern society with its manifold developments, modern science with its far-reaching investigations, modern thought with its daring independence—all present to the Church problems which she must solve, or else renounce her claim to universality. The Church of the twentieth century can no more be the Church of the nineteenth, or of the sixteenth, or of the fourth, or of the first century, than the grown man can wear the garments of his boyhood or his infancy. Two obvious courses are open to her. She may adhere obstinately to the letter, to the traditions of the past, to the forms which she once found adequate to her requirements, and so she may forfeit the future by a blind allegiance to the past. Or else she may break altogether with the past, she may fling her traditions to the winds, and throw herself into the full swing of modern progress. In this way the future may be hers, but she loses the sobering, steadying, and ennobling influence of the past; she forfeits the accumulated wisdom and piety and spiritual experience of nineteen centuries. But there is another, a more difficult, but a nobler and more fruitful,

path open to her. She may preserve the letter by obeying the spirit; she may bring out of her treasury things new and old, interpreting the old by the new and moderating the new by the old; she may admit that forms which suited the twelfth century would have been superstitious for the sixteenth, and that expressions of doctrine which edified the sixteenth may be meaningless to the nineteenth. In this way, and in this way only, she may reconcile the claims, so often pronounced irreconcilable, of the letter and the spirit, of the past and the future, of the form and the substance. In this way she may avoid the two extremes, equally pernicious, of supposing that God's revelation of Himself to man ceased in the first, or in the sixteenth, or in any past century; or, on the other hand, that God never revealed Himself at all till now; of attributing either to the past, or to the present, or to the future, a monopoly of the teaching of God's Spirit.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

R. E. BARTLETT.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

XII.—THE LATER MIRACLES.

THE thought and action of Christ so lived in harmony that neither could move without the other; the progress of one was the progress of both. Hence the very qualities that distinguish his later from his earlier teaching distinguish his later from his earlier works. In the very degree that the former becomes, in the region of the spirit, transcendental, expressive of a

higher consciousness and diviner claims, the latter become, in the region of nature, the more extraordinary, revelations of the Son of God that had been realized in the Son of man. We may name the earlier the less, the later the greater, miracles ; but we attach to these terms ideas almost the very opposite of those the Evangelists would have attached. We measure the greatness of a miracle by the degree in which it departs from the order of nature, but the Evangelists by the degree in which it manifested the nature and mind of Christ. To them it was not the contra-natural that surprised, but the manifested Christ that satisfied. The action became Him, and in the becoming action the Actor shewed his essential character, declared his native and inherent qualities.

The Evangelists, then, did not look at the miracles through our ideas of nature, but through their own idea of Christ ; and only where their idea is accepted as reasonable can their history be regarded as veracious. Our physicists say, the same law that moulds a dewdrop rounds a world. The law that brings a stone to the earth binds the planets to their spheres. In the processes of nature there is no great and no little. Force is one, everywhere changing, everywhere conserved, its action illustrated and its strength expressed in the minutest as in the mightiest physical phenomena. As the physicists conceive force in nature, the Evangelists conceived energy in Christ. To the one as to the other, to create life was as easy as to ripen the grape or form the leaf. The subdued fever and the stilled storm, the healed paralytic and the revived Lazarus, were each equally possible to the power immanent in Christ ; they were marvellous, not as depar-

tures from the order of nature, but as revelations of the nature He possessed. And so the Evangelical narratives are distinguished by a historical sobriety of form in marked contrast to their extraordinary contents, utterly unlike the humorous gravity, the conscious innocence of exaggeration or incongruity, that looks so naïvely out of our ancient nursery or mythical tales. Our Gospels, while they describe miracles, are, as it were, without the atmosphere of the miraculous, and narrate events that they feel to be in fullest harmony with the wondrous Person they pourtray. Pascal said,¹ "Jesus Christ speaks the greatest things so simply, that it seems as if He had never thought upon them." That spontaneous unpremeditated speech was his glory, proof that his words reflected a consciousness which knew no struggle, that his being and truth were so transparent to Himself that his claims were but as fruits of nature, his words like fragrances flung into the air by his spirit as it blushed into perfect flower. And the simplicity which distinguishes the Master's speech marks the disciples' history; and for the same reason—each is conscious that the extraordinary and miraculous is to the Person concerned but the ordinary and normal. Their faith in Christ made them insensible to the impossibilities of the physicist, and the narratives reflect alike in matter and manner the faith of their authors.

But their way of looking at events through their idea of Christ gives to the Evangelists not only a fine simplicity and realism of narrative—the more remarkable that their history is simply the most extraordinary ever written or believed by man; but also a fine consistency in their presentation of Jesus, a consistency

¹ *Pensées et Lettres*, ii. 319 (Faugère).

the more striking and significant that it seems on their part unconscious and undesigned. His thought and action did not simply move in harmony ; each seemed in its successive phases but a transcript of the other. The more He asserts in his teaching his personal pre-eminence, the more do his acts seem to declare it. As his speech became more egoistic, therefore more theological, without becoming any less ethical, his acts became declarative of a personality transcendent alike as regards nature and man. The ethical import of parables like the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, and the Good Samaritan, is as exalted and pure as that of the Sermon on the Mount ; but the theological import of the former is greater, marked by deeper insight into the character and aims of God, into the spirit and destinies of man. The discourse to Nicodemus is much more elementary than the great Johannean discourses to the disciples, speaks less of the Son's essential relation to the Father, or his organic connection with man. There are no indications in it of truths like this : " I and the Father are one ; " " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father : " or this, " I am the vine, ye are the branches : " or this, " If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." ¹ In the later teaching of Christ his Person is thus made to become explicative of God, redemptive of man, and creative of peaceful and happy relations between the two. And these changes are reflected in his acts. The miracle at Cana is concerned with the elements, as it were, of the world ; but the miracle at Bethany with the most awful mysteries of life, the saddest and most

¹ John x. 30 ; xiv. 9 ; xv. 1 ; xvi. 7.

sacred secrets of the spirit. While at first He is only one who can "heal the sick of divers diseases," later He is one whom "even the wind and sea obey."¹ While his first hearers were not so much astonished at Himself as at his doctrine, He appeared later to the men who knew Him best as one "transfigured, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."² The power He possessed seemed to grow by exercise; his last was his greatest miracle, his greatest words were his last. No sayings so divinely become Christ as the sayings on the cross; no act so finely illustrated his mind and mission as the raising of Lazarus. Action and speech were in lovely and significant harmony. He went to death from a victory over the grave. His right to lay down his life was proved by his power to raise from the dead; the prayer for the men that crucified Him is explained by the quickening word that had changed death into life. And so in Christ doctrine and deed confirm each other: if by the one He predicted the death, by the other He explained the resurrection that was to be accomplished at Jerusalem.

These qualities of the Evangelical narratives as records of so-called miraculous events—so finely natural and immiraculous in tone, so finely consistent and harmonious, almost without consciousness or design, in their conception and literary presentation of Christ—suggest a line of thought supplementary to one pursued in a former paper.³ The miracles were then discussed in their relation to the Person of Christ; now they are to be discussed in relation to the Evangelical

¹ Mark i. 24; iv. 41.

² Luke iv. 32; Matt. vii. 28; xvii. 2.

³ "The Earlier Miracles," *THE EXPOSITOR*, vol. viii. 288, ff.

history. The former discussion rose out of the earlier miracles, the first manifestations of the supernatural in Christ ; the present is directly concerned with the later miracles, the most extraordinary and least credible in nature. Yet these are the very events that the Evangelists relate so simply that it seems as if they thought nothing could be more natural than their occurrence, yet so subtly, that they are harmoniously woven into the very texture of the narrative, and essentially incorporated with its substance. And the qualities are indissolubly associated. It is because they conceive miracles as so natural to Christ, that they present them with an art so simple yet so perfect, so unconscious yet so complete.

Now, as our space is necessarily limited, the discussion cannot be allowed to range over the whole field, and so had better be confined to the very definite issues raised by a single typical case. The most typical case, fullest at once of critical difficulties and of the comfort that comes of the highest Christian truth, is the raising of Lazarus. It is the greatest of Christ's miracles : to know this is to know all. There is none harder to believe ; none that, believed, is so rich in meaning, so glorious in its assurance to faith and in its promise to hope. The truths embedded in it, and embalmed by it, are many and cardinal. It expresses with wonderful force the tender grace, the holy human sympathy, of Christ. His love for man is made eminently intense and personal by his love for Martha and Mary and Lazarus. His place in the home is made inmost and secure by faith in the gentle Presence that dwelt with the sisters of Bethany, a Presence that seems to consecrate the family, and make it the seat

and sanctuary of Divine influences. When, too, the soul sits dumb and desolate in "the shadow feared of man," peace and comfort come from the voice of Him who once spoke a dead friend into life ; or when sorrow has come to the spirit like a hot wind, which dries its moisture and burns up its fruits and flowers, banishing at once the rain of heaven and the dew of earth, then those tears Divine Manhood once wept at the grave of the man He loved fall on the arid soil, and moisten it into soft humanity again. Then, too, Christian hope might wither and die, were it not for the words that, while they might as words of a friend cheer the sisters, nothing less than a miracle could verify or transmute into words of truth for the world. We love our dead ; we love even their very dust. We love the memories that endear the past and the hopes that gladden the future ; making us, in the very moment when the longing born of love is mightiest, feel "the touch of the vanished hand," and hear "the sound of the voice that is still." And the faith which created these hopes owes in a large measure its being to the words spoken and the deed done at the grave of Lazarus. The words, "I am the resurrection and the life," have created the angel of hope that watches the sleep of the Christian dead, and makes it to the living radiant with peace and immortality. Were they to cease to be Christ's, should we not feel as if a stream of dismal paganism had been turned against our sun, and clothed it in clouds ? And if they stand alone, they as good as cease to be his ; the words without the miracle become but an impertinent or idle vaunt, a promise that all nature and all history have combined to deny and disappoint. Only lips that could

speaking creative words could say with truth, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

But the very eminence of its spiritual significance makes the difficulties that beset it graver and weightier. What is finely reasonable as a symbolical narrative becomes, when studied as a sober historical record, amazing and incredible. A miracle of healing is comparatively explicable; it may result from the subtle co-operation of two imaginations and two wills: but a miracle like this is an act of creation, an event not only outside all experience, but contrary to it. Then, too, the evidence for it seems slender, altogether inadequate. It is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel; the Synoptists know nothing of it. On the supposition that it occurred, their silence seems inexplicable. It is exactly the sort of event they would have loved to describe: it exalts Christ and degrades his enemies; it is the victorious proof of his claims and their infamy. It is most remarkable that three men, the nearest, too, to the time and place, should omit all mention of what is certainly Christ's most extraordinary achievement, whilst a fourth and more distant historian describes it in so full and realistic detail. When the matter is so stated, it does seem as if the difficulties must vanquish belief, and reasonable faith be pronounced impossible.

But, now, let us look at the matter from the side of the Evangelical history, especially with the view of discovering how it is affected by the denial of the miracle, whether it become more or less consistent and comprehensible, more or less coherent and credible. Let us see, then, how any of the several forms of denial compatible with historical criticism would affect the narrative that more directly concerns us. There is the

theory favoured by the older Rationalism, that the fancied miracle was due to a series of happy accidents and coincidences ; that the death had been apparent, not real ; that the cold atmosphere of the tomb and the piercing accents of a loved voice had combined to awake Lazarus from his deathlike sleep ; that the agitation of Jesus was due to the appearance of the revived corpse, but, presence of mind overmastering fear, the summons, " Lazarus, come forth !" had as its result the emergence of the supposed dead man. This interpretation was intended, while denying the reality of the miracle, to preserve the historical truth of the narrative. But how did it succeed ? The miracle is introduced by a history, which must be negatived if the natural explanation is to stand. Jesus said, " Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep, but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep."¹ And this clear pre-intimation of purpose and prophecy of the event are at once emphasized by the words, " Lazarus is dead ; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe."² Then the words of Jesus to Martha are significant, " Thy brother shall rise again,"³ especially in the light of his answer at the grave to her remonstrance about the removal of the stone, " Saidst I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God ?"⁴ These sayings were immovable stones of stumbling to the theory that maintained the reality of the event, but denied the truth of the miracle, for the accident of the end could not explain the expressed design of the beginning. The historical truth of both was impossible, If the event was accidental, the sayings must be false ; if the

¹ John xi. 11.² Ibid. xi. 14, 15.³ Ibid. xi. 23.⁴ Ibid. xi. 40.

sayings were true, the event could not be accidental. But the theory, granting as probable all its violent improbabilities, was even in more radical contradiction to the narrative. It failed to explain the conduct of Jesus. Why did He go to the grave? Why did He desire to see the buried Lazarus? A dead body was a hateful thing to the Jew; to touch it was to be defiled. If Jesus was above the prejudices of his own countrymen, He must still more have been above the morbid curiosity of ours. It would be hard to imagine anything more un-Christlike than the desire to see the wasted dead, or to look into an offensive "charnel cave." The criticism that must assume such a desire stands convicted of incapacity to understand the Person it would reach and pourtray.

Has the mythical theory, then, which was more merciless to Rationalism than even to orthodoxy, been more successful? Strauss explained this and the similar Evangelical miracles as due to the early Christian imagination, unconsciously creative, clothing Jesus in the supernatural attributes and actions of Elijah and Elisha, the most wonderful of the Old Testament prophets.¹ With the philosophical bases and critical assumptions of the mythical hypothesis we have here no concern, but only with the question whether the explanation it offered be compatible with this narrative in particular or the Evangelical history in general. The first thing that strikes us, as affecting both points, is—it does seem strange that the finest creation of the mythical imagination, working under conditions essentially Jewish, and with materials derived from the Old Testament, should be found in the Fourth Gospel. It

¹ *Leben Jesu*, § 100.

is marked throughout by almost fierce Judaic antipathies, and its want of a Hebrew atmosphere and colouring has been held one of its most distinctive characteristics. But the purest and most original work of Hellenistic speculation does not seem the proper soil for the purest and most original product of the Judæo-Christian phantasy. The one position is the negation of the other. The theory would have required our narrative to appear in Matthew, and can only regard it as misplaced in John, without being able to give any reason why it has been so misplaced. Then the narrative is wonderfully sober, vivid, and truthful in feature and detail—far too much so to be the work of an unconsciously creative imagination, which, being essentially exaggerative, never sees its objects as they stand revealed by the clear light of nature to a clear and searching eye. If the central event is mythical, the incidents that surround it must shew the action, the tool-marks, as it were, of the mythical faculty. But do they? The topographical accuracy is remarkable,¹ and still more so the minute and delicate way in which peculiarities of character are indicated,² the circumstantial and careful attention to unimportant yet most significant details relative to the persons, their relations, their history, their feelings, hopes, actions, as influenced now by custom and now by personal reasons, sorrow, concern, or love.³ This is not the way in which the mythical imagination goes to work: its creations are on a large scale, thrown off with a fine contempt for those delicacies of light and shade that in real life so subtly cross and blend. And

¹ John xi. 18.

² Ibid. xi. 16, 20, 28, 29, 32. Cf. 21, 39.

³ Ibid. xi. 1, 2, 5, 8, 19, 28-31, 33, 38.

when we analyze the narrative, we find it too full of tender and moving humanity to be a creation of the idea. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."¹ The dropping out of Mary's name is a most significant touch, as if the stronger had absorbed the softer sister, or been to her a sort of mother or head. Then, their love to Christ is finely indicated in the message,² which expresses a trust that knows no hesitancy or fear. The conversation, too, of Jesus and his disciples is finely in keeping with their respective characters: they afraid to go into Judæa, He afraid only of the darkness, resolved to walk in the light, even though it should lead straight down into the valley of death.³

But the most perfect scene is the successive interviews with the sisters. Each is true to her character as we know it from Luke.⁴ Martha—strong, self-possessed, not so absorbed in grief or in the formal comforts custom offered as to be blind or indifferent to what was going on around—is the first to hear that Jesus has come; and, with a heart equally divided between love and care for the living and sorrow for the dead, she goes out to meet Him. Mary, contemplative, emotional, a genuine mystic, so filled with her great sorrow as to be passive in its hands, sits still in the house. Martha, erect, calm while regretful, goes with quiet thoughtfulness softly out to meet Him. Mary, broken and bowed down, is suddenly, when she hears Jesus has come, filled by a new emotion, and driven, as it were, by an irresistible impulse, "she rose up hastily, and went out," and on reaching Jesus, "fell down at his feet." The myth-making faculty does not

¹ John xi. 5.² Ibid. xi. 3.³ Ibid. xi. 8-10.⁴ Luke x. 38-42.

work in this delicate, yet most gentle and human, way. It is possessed by the love of the miraculous, lives in the region of sensuous exaggeration, where the finer qualities of the spirit are lost, and only the vulgar marvels of the senses live and flourish. Here we have a true "sanctuary of sorrow," with all its sorrowful elements born of man, all its sacred and comforting influences born of God.

But if the mythical theory was too violent and improbable, too little historical, too purely *a priori*, what of the theory that succeeded and superseded it, the theory formulated by Baur, developed and applied by Zeller and Schweigler? Baur thought the narrative was an artistic rearrangement of materials found in the Synoptists, especially Luke; its motive being determined by the dogmatic aim or purpose of the Gospel. It is, as it were, an acted parable, designed to illustrate the words, "I am the resurrection and the life." As Christ by healing the blind appeared as the Light of the world, so by raising the dead He appeared as its Life. The narrative was but a symbol or sensuous form for this truth. The materials used were borrowed from Luke, the widow's son of Nain, the scene between Martha and Mary, and the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, where the wish was so devoutly expressed that Lazarus might be raised from the dead, in order to instruct the living.¹ There was, indeed, no point that more finely exercised the ingenious critics of Tübingen than this, shewing how John had so skilfully manipulated a parable of Luke as to transform it into a history illustrative of the power of faith against the absolute unbelief of the Jews. But their

¹ Luke vii. 12; x. 38-42; xvi. 19-31.

endeavours mainly proved their own surpassing ingenuity. The parable and the history are alike in this—each has a Lazarus, and in each he dies : in every other respect they are fundamentally different.¹ The parable shews how the rewards and penalties of the future redress the wrongs of the present ; but the history regards only the present, and has no eye for the future. In the parable the return from death is pronounced impossible ; but the history brings Lazarus out from the very bosom of death. The parable strongly emphasizes the poverty of Lazarus ; but in the history he lives in comfort, if not in affluence. The moral of the parable is, “ They will not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead ; ”² but the history says, “ Many of the Jews who had seen the things Jesus did, believed on him.”³ The Tübingen derivation of the narrative from the parable was thus possible only by emphasizing two superficial resemblances, and forgetting many radical differences. If Baur declared that the Lazarus of the history presupposes the parable of Lazarus, Hengstenberg affirmed that the parable of Lazarus presupposes the Lazarus of history ; and each had about equal authority for his dictum, uttered the conceit of a vagrant fancy, not the sober judgment of criticism.

The Tübingen criticism was, indeed, here as thoroughly unscientific as unsound. It was often curiously unfaithful to its own philosophical principles—instead of regarding history as the manifestation and explication of the ideal, imagining that where the ideal began the real or historical ceased ; that where persons like Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were made to exhibit

¹ Hase, *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 513.

² Luke xvi. 31.

³ John xi. 45.

or illustrate the power embodied in Christ, they could not really have lived. Yet when we find the sisters mentioned in Luke reappearing in John, with their respective characters so subtly and perfectly preserved in new and most tragic relations, it is a proof, not of literary invention working with borrowed materials, but of historian supplementing historian, the two halves of a broken ring joining to form a whole.¹ Then, too, if our narrative is to be interpreted as a conscious literary creation, meant to typify Christ, the incarnate Logos, as the Life victorious over death, how are sayings and acts that positively contradict this design to be explained?² He would be but a clumsy artist who allowed such incompatible elements to steal into his picture; but a clumsy fiction is no fiction: it invites the detection and exposure that are its death. As nature, John's art is here inimitable; as art or invention, it is poor indeed.

But, now, we come to another and still more extraordinary explanation, without doubt the most unworthy ever proposed by a scholar and critic of reputation. M. Renan sees that an event little less marvellous than a miracle is needed to explain the enthusiasm of love and hate which at once glorified and embittered the death of Jesus. So he conjectures that³ "something really happened at Bethany which was looked upon as a resurrection." In the heavy and impure atmosphere of Jerusalem the conscience of Jesus lost something of its original purity, and He was no longer either Himself or his own master. In the act which was desired the family of Bethany were led to take

¹ Hase, *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 514.

² John xi. 4, 33, 37, 41.

Vie de Jésus, chap. xxiii.

part. "Faith knows no other law than the interest of that which it believes to be true." Obedient to this comprehensive principle, "Lazarus caused himself to be wrapped in bandages as if dead, and shut up in the tomb of his family;" and when Jesus came and ordered the stone to be removed, "Lazarus came forth in his bandages, his head covered with a winding-sheet." The old Rationalism was sanity to the new Romanticism. It implies a moral obtuseness one may wonder at but cannot reason with. Lack of insight into the character of Jesus and the motives that inspired the early Christian society may lead to strange results, but it can hardly be either cured or corrected by hostile argument.

The narrative, then, does not seem rationally interpretable on any theory that negatives the miracle. But it is one thing to say, These theories are false, and quite another thing to say, The miracle is true. This is a point that does not simply concern the interpreter; it concerns the historical critic as well. From his side we are confronted with two questions—one as to the silence of the Synoptists, another as to the silence of the witnesses at the trial. If a miracle so extraordinary had really been performed, could the Synoptists have passed it over in silence? or could the trial, a few days later, of the Person who worked it have been conducted and concluded without any reference or allusion to what must have overborne and outweighed all oral testimony, however adverse? Are these two points capable of reasonable explanation? or must they be allowed seriously to affect the authenticity and credibility of the narrative?

Let us, as the most serious and significant, consider

first the silence of the Synoptists. And here it is necessary to observe that the silence is not peculiar to one narrative, does not affect it alone, but everything which John records as having been done and spoken in and about Jerusalem prior to the Passion. The difficulties connected with the silence must therefore be borne, not by our history alone, but by the Gospel as a whole; and, of course, the degree in which their pressure can be distributed over the whole is the measure of the relief given to each individual part. If the silence had been here, and nowhere else, it might have been ominous; but as it is, within the limits specified, general, it must be explicable through the essential character of the Fourth in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, not through the peculiar nature of our special narrative. The Synoptists are, in a sense, not three, but one. They have a common source, and, it may be said, common materials. Then, their history is Galilean; alike as to scope and contents it is defined by the kind of ministry there exercised. When they come to Jerusalem it is to tell the story of the Passion; and, for them, its shadow is so deep that it eclipses and conceals all besides. The Galilean history is a unity, a circle which an incident like the miracle at Bethany would have broken. It is noteworthy that Luke's fragmentary notice of Martha and Mary says nothing as to their home, only that Jesus "entered into a certain village."¹ The incident could find a place in his history only as unlocalized. While their silence is thus not only explicable, but, in a sense, inevitable, it is significant that they make Bethany the home of Jesus while at Jerusalem,² and the point whence He starts on his triumphal entry.³ Certainly He must

¹ Luke x. 38.

² Matt. xxi. 17; Mark xi. 11, 12.

³ Ibid. xi. 1-11; Luke xix. 29, ff.

have found there kind hearts ; and there, too, the people must have found a cause of wonder and enthusiasm.

But the speech of the Fourth is as capable of explanation as the silence of the Synoptic Gospels. John is as much concerned with the Judæan as the Synoptists with the Galilean ministry, and for reasons that touch the essential character of his Gospel. His history is ideal, without ceasing to be historical. The idea that receives more sensuous expression in the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, receives subtler expression in the history that is so tragically localized in and round the Old Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, the enemies while the descendants of the ancient people of God. The city He had consecrated, but they depraved, was the appropriate scene of the last fell conflict between their guilt and his victorious grace. And John describes the various acts in the great drama, from the first ominous word to the tragic climax. Without his Gospel the death of Christ would, even on its simply historical side, remain to us a riddle—a mere wanton and unprovoked crime. With his Gospel, we can see the hostile forces gathering, and mark their inevitable march. The Synoptists shew us the Master educating his disciples, founding his society, instituting his kingdom ; but John shews us Christ in conflict with the Jews—how He came to his own, but his own refused to receive Him—with the consequent struggle between his light and their darkness, culminating on their part in the Cross, on his in the Resurrection.

And the history is written to exhibit this tragic struggle in its several successive stages. The miracles are so presented as at once to define and deepen it, as to shew their influence on the progress of the

dread story. The earliest miracles excite a wonder that almost becomes faith.¹ For a moment belief and unbelief seem alike possible; but the moment is of the briefest, only one "man of the Pharisees" seeking Jesus, the others holding aloof in disdainful neglect. The miracle at the pool of Bethesda shews the neglect developed into hostility; the Jews "persecute" Jesus, and "seek to slay him."² The cure of the man born blind deepens the exasperation; Healer and healed are alike hated, and the "disciples" of Moses ominously pronounce "this man a sinner."³ The raising of Lazarus forms the tragic climax: what most manifests Christ's power most provokes the Jews' anger; the very event that best proves his Divine energy ripens their guilty purpose.⁴ The miracle forces the persons in the divine drama to declare themselves, and face each other as absolute foes—so manifests the divinity in Christ as to compel the Jews either into submission or into fatal collision. The Nemesis that follows the guilty choice drives them on the latter: the Man is to die really on account of the miracle, or, rather, what it signified as to Him and threatened as to them, but ostensibly "for the people"—*i.e.*, his death is necessary to the maintenance of their religious ascendancy, but is to be demanded for political reasons. Our narrative is thus an integral part of the tragedy unfolded in the Fourth Gospel—is indeed at once a culminating and a turning point—the point where the hostility of the past culminates, and where the crime of the Cross begins. The speech of John was thus as inevitable as the silence of the Synoptists is explicable.

¹ John ii. 23; iii. 2.

³ Ibid. ix. 16, 24, 28, 29, 34.

² Ibid. v. 16.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 47-53.

Without the miracle his history had wanted its key ; with it their history had wanted its unity—the unity it owed to its moving within the limits of the Galilean ministry, the geographical term denoting also a distinct intellectual, moral, and social sphere.

Our discussion of the first question, the silence of the Synoptists over against the speech of John, has brought us to the point from which we can best approach the second question, the silence of the witnesses at the trial. The reason is obvious ; John subtly makes Caiaphas indicate it.¹ Jesus is to be a religious victim disguised as a political offender. Rome, tolerant to the religions of her subject peoples, would not judge in matters of faith.² To charge Jesus with an offence against Moses had simply been to release Him ; their one chance was to convict Him of a political crime. To this point their energies were directed ; so their charge was, "We found this person perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ the king."³ The Synoptists and John are here thoroughly agreed. The priests and rulers translated the Hebrew theocratic into the Roman political idea, and urged the death of Jesus because He had claimed to be "the King of the Jews," which they denied, confessing that they had no king but Cæsar.⁴ But John alone shews us the framing of the charge and the reasons for it—the craft that made the least political of teachers a sacrifice by clothing Him in the sins of the most tumultuous and rebellious of peoples ; "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the

¹ John xi. 49, 50.

² Acts xviii. 15.

³ Luke xxiii. 2.

⁴ Matt. xxvii. 11, 29, 37 ; Mark xv. 2, 12, 26 ; Luke xxiii. 38 ; John xviii. 33, 35, 37 ; xix. 12, 14, 15.

people, and that the whole nation perish not." But this scheme required a carefully arranged trial, with well-selected witnesses. They must be theirs, not Christ's—speaking not to what He was, but to what He was needed to be. So there could only be suppression of whatever could make for his divine mission and character, and bold suggestion of whatever could make out political speech and designs.

But it is not enough to shew that objections urged against the truth of our narrative turn into evidences and claims on its behalf; we must also shew that it is necessary to the subsequent Evangelical history. As it grew out of what preceded, what succeeds grows out of it. This is a point which M. Renan has well perceived. He says, "If we reject this event as imaginary, all the edifice of the last week in the life of Jesus, to which our Gospel gives so much solidity, crumbles at one blow." This is all the more serious that the Fourth Gospel from this point "contains an amount of minute information infinitely superior to that of the Synoptists."¹ But the relation our narrative bears to the Johannean history is less significant than its relation to the Synoptical. One side of this relation has been seen — that touching the trial; now we may note another. The triumphal entry is a very remarkable, and, as it stands in the Synoptists, an unexplained incident. The enthusiasm of the people seems to be without any real or adequate cause. The wonder that Jesus had at first awakened had long since died, and He had been living sadly with "his own" under the shadow of the Cross. Why this sudden outburst of an admiration and enthusiasm that mocked even the joyous

¹ *Vie de Jésus*, p. 514.

homage of his early ministry? Why did the people in these last dark days do as they had never done in his first bright ones—hail Him as the Messiah, the King coming in the name of the Lord? In seeking an answer, we must note the point from which Jesus approaches the city, Bethany. In Bethany He finds a home; his fame seems associated with it. As He comes from it towards Jerusalem, the multitude flows out to meet Him, breaking, as it sweeps round his little band, into the glad shout, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!"¹ The event that explained the anger and guilty resolution of the priests will also explain the enthusiasm of the people—will explain, too, their sudden recoil into the fierce and pitiless passion which demanded the Cross and mocked the Crucified. Disappointed enthusiasm is dangerously akin to furious hate. The greater the act that kindled the enthusiasm, the harder it is to satisfy its demands. The men who had been stirred to admiration by a miracle would be certain to crave miracle, and the craving ungratified would leave them, first suspicious, then discontented, then angry. Where enthusiasm was for the power rather than the person of Christ, his behaviour in Jerusalem could only disappoint and provoke. When the men who had hailed Him as Christ the King saw that He did no miracle, but quietly submitted to indignities, capture, mockery, they felt like men who had been deceived into acts of undeserved honour, and, turning against Him revengeful, they broke into the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Thus our miracle explains the enthusiasm at once of their homage and their hate,

¹ Luke xix. 38.

shews how the people that welcomed Him into the city could also be the people that followed Him along the way of sorrow with the scornful cry, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

Into the rich and most varied spiritual meanings of our narrative it is not possible to enter. It is a divine allegory, full of the most sublime and consolatory truths; and to attempt to unfold these, would be to attempt to reach the deepest treasures of our faith. Two living poets have, each in his own way, used this narrative. Tennyson seizes its influence on Mary, and imagines the sister satisfied in the possession of her brother, and restful in the presence of Christ.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits,
But he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Browning, stronger, more masterful, has, with rare imaginative insight, gone to the heart of the matter, and presented us with a picture of Lazarus as he may have lived and must have spoken. Karshish, the Arab physician, meets him, and feels—

The man had something in the look of him—
awed, convinced, credulous in the presence of his story,

unable to disbelieve it, yet ashamed of his belief. Browning has nothing finer than the analysis of Karshish as he tells the story he has heard from Lazarus.

This man so cured regards the Curer, then,
 As—God forgive me !—who but God Himself,
 Creator and Sustainer of the world,
 That came and dwelt in flesh on it awhile !
 —Sayeth that such an one was born and lived,
 Taught, heal'd the sick, broke bread at his own house,
 Then died, with Lazarus by, for aught I know,
 And yet was . . . what I said, nor choose repeat,
 And must have so avouch'd himself, in fact,
 In hearing of this very Lazarus,
 Who saith—but why all this of what he saith ?
 Why write of trivial matters, things of price
 Calling at every moment for remark ?
 I noticed on the margin of a pool
 Blue flowering borage, the Aleppo sort
 Aboundeth, very nitrous ! It is strange !

Yet the tale fascinates him ; its wonderful truth has filled his imagination, and melts him into admiration and awe.

The very God ! Think, Abib : dost thou think ?
 So, the All-Great were the All-loving too—
 So, through the thunder comes a human voice
 Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here !
 Face, my hands fashion'd, see it in myself !
 Thou hast no power, nor may'st conceive of mine,
 But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
 And thou must love me who hast died for thee."

And there, for Lazarus and for all ages, lies the inmost truth of the miracle.

A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE EPISTLE TO
THE ROMANS.

I PROPOSE in this paper to select a few of the various readings which occur in the principal manuscripts of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and to set them before the general reader in such a way as may possibly lead him to see the interest and importance of that study of textual criticism which, during late years, has been so largely developed. It is probable that before another year is over we may receive from the hands of the Revision Committee that revised translation, at any rate of the New Testament, which will demand the serious attention of all who love the Word of God. The decisions of the Committee are wisely regarded as private, nor have I ventured to inquire as to the readings which they adopt in any of the passages at which we shall here briefly glance. But this paper—though I designedly abstain from entering into minute and intricate details—may at least serve to shew to some, who may not have turned their attention to the subject, that questions of considerable magnitude are involved in the endeavour to determine the sacred text. Even in modern books and speeches much may often depend on a very slight variation. Some of us may remember the commotion excited in France, not many years ago, by a speech in which a certain prince was reported to have exclaimed in the Senate, *A bas les prêtres !* and how that excitement was allayed by his declaration that he had said, not *prêtres*, but *traitres*. Instances might be multiplied in which the alteration of a word or a letter, accidentally misreported, has led to conclusions which were never intended by the

speaker or writer ; but if accuracy is necessary in publishing the words of ordinary statesmen, how incomparably more important is it that we should, as far as possible, recover the exact words used in the sacred oracles of our religion by men inspired to teach the world.

That the actual autographs of the Apostles and Evangelists have perished is universally admitted. So absolutely is this the case that, strange to say, even among all the myriads of spurious relics of all kinds scattered over Christendom, no Church or reliquary so much as professes to own the authentic manuscript of any Gospel or Epistle. Further than this, it is almost certain, both from the direct allusions of St. Paul, and from the circumstances of the case, that the thirteen of his epistles which have come down to us by no means include all that he wrote. It is *a priori* inconceivable that one so active-minded as he was, and one who seized every favourable opportunity to write to his converts and to his Churches, should have allowed many vigorous months and years of his career to slip by between the various groups of his epistles, without dictating to Timothy or Luke or Tertius the thoughts and messages of which his heart was full. We may indeed be sure that the providence of God has preserved for us all that was essential, all that was of primary importance in what he wrote ; and when we consider how many invaluable letters of the world's greatest thinkers are now hopelessly lost, how many books, and portions of books, which would have had for us the deepest interest, have perished or disappeared even during the last five hundred years ; when, too, we bear in mind how slight and fugitive was the papyrus

on which the originals of the apostolic letters were probably written—we may well see a special Providence in the preservation of such brief compositions amid the numberless physical catastrophes and political revolutions of eighteen hundred years. Whole decades of Livy, whole books of Tacitus, have been lost; the poems of Gallus, the tragedies of Pollio, the memoirs of Agrippina, even the works of deified autocrats like Claudius and Nero, have been absorbed by “the iniquity of oblivion;” and yet the few lines which St. John wrote to the well-beloved Gaius, and the few verses which St. Paul sent to Philemon with his runaway slave, Onesimus, have survived conflagrations and earthquakes, and “the drums and tramlings of a hundred triumphs.”

I think, too, that we may see another most distinct trace of the providence of God in the preservation of the text from all *material* corruptions. Hundreds of influences were at work which might well have tended to pollute the stream of religion at its very fount. Forgery was by no means unknown to the earliest centuries, by no means unknown even to the age of the Apostles. Apart from wilful forgery, neither the Jews, nor even the early Christians, regarded the adoption of some famous name as a literary crime. It may be said of the Jewish literature of the apostolic age that it was normally pseudonymous; and in early Christian literature we should hesitate to attribute conscious dishonesty to the author of the Epistle of Barnabas or the interpolators of the Epistles of Ignatius. Besides this, dogmatic bias bore with tremendous force on the honesty of transcribers, even when they were writing with a genuine work before them, as it

has done in every age on the honesty of translators and commentators ; and if it be but too clear that even the Fathers are often led by theological prejudice to insincere handling of the Word of God, and if the turn of some phrases even in Luther's and our own Authorized Version is distinctly traceable to religious prepossession, we might well have expected that, again and again, we should have to deal with perplexities of reading which were due, not to the sacred writers, but to the doctrinal or ecclesiastical convictions of the scribes who multiplied the copies of their works. When we add to these sources of error those which arise from human infirmity ; from weariness ; from momentary inattention ; from involuntary repetition ; from mispronunciations whether of the dictator or writer ; from reminiscence of parallel passages ; from the unconscious influence of words of a similar sound ; from marginal glosses creeping into the text ; from abbreviations ; from the similarity of letters ; from slight changes introduced for the purposes of the lectionary ; from the tendency to substitute hortative for categorical forms ; from the desire to get rid of difficulties or harmonize discrepancies ; from the substitution of commoner for rare words, and of easier for more difficult constructions,—we may well imagine that the number of variations which have found their way into different manuscripts, in spite of the sacred reverence and exceptional care of the writers, may be counted by tens of thousands. Errors of sight, hearing, memory, have all tended to unconscious mistakes ; dogmatic, critical, monastic, religious, moral, and exegetic prepossessions have all produced intentional changes. Every one of these influences might receive ample illustration from

the Received Text used for our English Version ; and when we bear in mind the fatal magic and force of words ; the superstitions and fetish-worship which in all ages have marred the true interpretation of Scripture ; the dangerous opinions which actually *have* been stereotyped by the turn of phrases or the accidental connotation of ill-chosen words ; the fatal tendency of theologians to build up inverted pyramids of scholastic system ; the temptation of preachers innumerable to darken the air with the spiral fumes of inference evolved in endless “therefores” from “the narrow aperture of single texts ;” when we bear in mind how easily the many tendencies towards a corrupted text at which I have glanced might have been the source of fatal perils,—we may well believe that, but for a divine guidance, the New Testament would have become, in many passages, a terrible enigma—an enigma capable of being used with tremendous force against the free consciences and saving hopes of mankind. From this grave peril we have been saved by the superintending care of God over the fortunes of the Church. For what is the fact ? Prejudice, accident, system, have done their utmost ; in some passages the conflict of evidence is such that we can arrive at no certain conclusion ; even dogmatic bias, and interpolation, and ecclesiastical interests, and marginal annotations, have here and there left traces of their perceptible influence ; and yet not only are we, year by year, approaching with greater certainty to the determination of the original reading—not only are the disputable passages becoming constantly minimized—not only are the materials on which a decision must be formed so numerous as to render all con-

jectural emendations superfluous—but it may even be said without hesitation, that in no single instance does the uncertainty or error of reading introduce any doubt or difficulty respecting the essential doctrines of our faith. Vast as has been the extension of the science of textual criticism since the days of Bentley, we need not alter a word of the celebrated remark which he made 150 years ago: “The real text of the sacred writers does not now (since the originals have been so long lost) lie in any manuscript or edition, but is dispersed in them all. It is competently exact, indeed, in the worst manuscript now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them. Choose as awkwardly as you will, choose the worst by design, out of the whole lump of readings, . . . make your 30,000 (variations) as many more, if numbers of copies can ever reach that sum: all the better to a knowing and a serious reader, who is thereby more richly furnished to select what he sees genuine. But even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet, with the most sinister and absurd choice, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter, nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same.”¹

But if this be the case, it may be asked what is the use of all the infinite labour which has been undergone in the collation of manuscripts and balancing of authorities? It would be hardly possible for any one to feel the full force of the answer who has not given some time and thought to the subject. If the classification of readings led to no results of any value whatever, it

¹ “Remarks on Discourse of Freethinking,” by Phileleutherus Lipsiensis (1813), i. § 32.

would still furnish a rich source of illustration to various psychological questions ; and the determination of the right reading often requires a delicate exercise of judgment and insight which is in itself no mean training. But it is quite a mistake to suppose that the certain results of textual criticism are few or unimportant. They sometimes throw a flood of light on Church history and the tendencies of early thought. How instructive, for instance, are the few demonstrable interpolations into the text, especially when taken in connection with the omissions. When we see the word "fasting" added to prayer, with set purpose—probably in such passages as Matthew xvii. 21 ; Mark ix. 29 ; Acts x. 30 ; and certainly in 1 Corinthians vii. 5—we detect the same ascetic sternness which took offence at the mercy shewn by our Lord, and therefore omitted the *pericope adulterae*. In the interpolation of the three heavenly witnesses into 1 John v. 7—probably from a marginal annotation—we trace the systematic development of the doctrine of the Trinity into that rigidly dogmatic form which it assumes in the *Quicumque vult*. In the inserted confession of faith in Acts viii. 37, we observe the growth of an ecclesiastical system. In the reading *μνείας* ("memorials") for *χρειαίς* ("necessities") in Romans xii. 13, we can hardly fail to detect the growth of that tendency which ended in the adoration of saints. In the triple repetition of the undying worm and quenchless flame in the metaphorical description of Gehenna, in Mark ix. 44, 45, we observe the tendency to dwell upon, and to emphasize, the imagery of retribution and despair. These are marked instances ; but there are very many passages where the restoration of the true reading adds very greatly to

the force, passion, beauty, or significance of our present inferior text. Perhaps some of the instances which I shall proceed to give, with as much simplicity and in a manner as little technical as possible, will deepen this impression in the reader's mind. Let me add that we may hail as a hopeful omen for the future, the transparent desire for truth in this matter which is now so prevalent in the minds of all learned men. No amount of difference of opinion, even on fundamental questions, was deemed sufficient to exclude from our Revision Committee any scholar who on other grounds was selected as eligible. No text, no reading, however important for doctrinal controversy, is allowed to stand if the balance of evidence is against it. We believe that this would still be the case even if either of the disputable or spurious passages was the sole support for some current opinion, since all wise men who have learned the inmost spirit of Christianity have seen that truth only suffers by being defended with weapons of error, and that lying for God is *more* and not *less* culpable than any other form of falsehood. Truth, however, has in no instance suffered from the abandonment of dubious readings. The doctrine of the Trinity is established on grounds so sure, that the text about the three heavenly witnesses is not in the least required to prove it. If "fasting" has no business to appear in 1 Corinthians vii. 5, it is on the other hand undoubtedly sanctioned, and even recommended, in Matthew ix. 15. The worm and flame were really introduced in Mark ix. 48, though probably not in the other two repetitions. The necessity for some confession of faith before admittance to adult baptism is too obvious to require the factitious support of Acts viii. 37. In all these cases,

and many more which might be easily adduced, the cause of religion, even in the eyes of its most timid defenders, can only gain by the rejection of dubious or unauthorized supports. My object, then, will not be to enter exhaustively into lists of various readings, but only to illustrate the interest and importance of the questions to which some of them give rise. For this purpose I shall confine my references to the chief Uncial Manuscripts which range from the fourth to the ninth century. For the reader's convenience, the letters by which the chief MSS. of the Pauline Epistles are now distinguished are repeated in the note.¹ A good and full account of the manuscripts themselves, their history and their value, will be found in Mr. Scrivener's "Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament."

I will confine myself in this paper to a few various readings in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

1. Even in the salutation we are met by a most interesting and valuable phenomenon. It is that the words "*in Rome*" are deliberately omitted by G, and by one not unimportant cursive (No. 47). The fact, until recently, received little or no notice, because the words are found in all the other uncials and cursives, and therefore the *diplomatic* evidence (*i.e.*, the evidence of MSS.) in their favour would seem to be simply overwhelming. And yet, although the reading "*in Rome*" is perfectly genuine and justifiable, the omission of this specification by G is probably also justifiable,²

¹ $\aleph$, Codex Sinaiticus, fourth century; A, Codex Alexandrinus, fifth century; B, Codex Vaticanus, fourth century; C, Codex Ephraemi, fifth century; D, Codex Claromontanus, sixth century; E, Codex Sangermanensis, tenth century; F, Codex Augiensis, ninth century; G, Codex Boernerianus, ninth century; H, Codex Coislinianus, sixth century; K, Codex Mosquensis, ninth century.

² The close affinity of G with F makes it all but certain that *ἐν Ρώμῃ* would also have been omitted by that very valuable Codex, which here is deficient.

and adds great force to a conjecture which removes a multitude of difficulties. It is known that, similarly, in Ephesians i. 1, the words "*in Ephesus*" are omitted by two manuscripts of such immense authority as $\aleph$ and B; that Marcion did not read them; that St. Jerome and Tertullian found them omitted in some MSS.; and that St. Basil tells us that they did not exist in the ancient copies. In this instance, therefore, there is strong reason to believe that the words are not necessarily authentic, and the hypothesis that the Epistle to the Ephesians was *encyclical*, and not addressed to Ephesus alone, receives strong confirmation. Further, this omission of the words "*in Ephesus*" accounts for the fact that Marcion seems to have read, and not to have invented, the reading, "*in Laodicea*;" and it tends to establish the genuineness of the Epistle by accounting for its impersonal character, and the absence of all salutations to the members of a Church in which St. Paul had so long laboured. While therefore the vast majority of MSS. were perfectly correct in reading "*in Ephesus*," because that reading would actually have been inserted in the copy despatched to that city,— $\aleph$ and B are no less correct in *omitting* it, because a blank would have been left to be filled up by Tychicus, Onesimus, or whoever carried duplicate copies of the letter to others of the Asian Churches. The establishment of this result would alone suffice to make us examine respectfully the reasons which led the transcriber of G to omit the words "*in Rome*" in Romans i. 7. The letter was undoubtedly sent to Rome, and meant for the Roman Church; but is it not nearly certain on other grounds that the most elaborate of all St. Paul's writings, the one which is the most dis-

tinct and developed expression of "*his* gospel," would have been sent, with slight and appropriate variations in the salutation and in the final greeting, to *other* Christian Churches besides? This hypothesis elucidates several curious facts. It explains why the final doxology (Rom. xvi. 25-27) is also placed at the end of Chapter xiv. in K, in nearly all the cursive MSS., in various Versions, and in manuscripts mentioned by Rufinus and several of the Fathers; why it is read twice over (after Chapters xiv. and xvi.) in A; why it is omitted altogether in F, G, and other ancient copies mentioned by the Fathers; and why Chapters xv. and xvi. were apparently unknown to Marcion. It may also account for the curious change of tone which marks the later Chapters of the Epistle, so unlike the careful and almost distant courtesy of the first twelve chapters. It also serves to explain why the Epistle seems to conclude three times over (Chapters xv. 33; xvi. 20, 27), and even four times, if we accept as partially correct the otherwise unaccountable transposition of the final doxology to the end of Chapter xiv. Finally, it furnishes a fresh reason for the belief that Chapter xvi. (where in Verse 5 the true reading is "*of Asia*," not "*of Achaia*") was really addressed to the Church of Ephesus, and not to the Church of Rome. This latter hypothesis, for which I shall give reasons elsewhere, not only removes a host of difficulties, but prevents us from forming very mistaken conclusions about the Church in Rome—conclusions which it would be almost impossible to reconcile with the references to it in the Acts, and in the Epistles written during the first and second captivity of the Apostle. If then, on

wholly independent grounds, we are led to see how reasonable is the supposition that, when St. Paul wrote this greatest and most formal of his Epistles, he sent copies of it, with special terminations and greetings, to other of his Churches—and that our present text preserves more than one of these different exemplars—we find a strong and valuable confirmation of this theory in the omission which is peculiar to the *Codex Boernerianus* (G). We see in that omission (which cannot conceivably be a mere arbitrary innovation, since no influence, critical, dogmatic, or exegetical, could possibly account for it) the traditional recognition of a deeply interesting fact.

2. Romans i. 32: "Who knowing fully the just decree of God, that they who practise (*πράσσοντες*) such things are worthy of death, not only do (*ποιοῦσιν*) them, but," &c.

Here, in D, E, G, and various Latin manuscripts, the verse runs, "Who, *fully knowing* the just decree of God, *did not know* that they," &c., "for (or, 'but') they not only do them," &c. The Received Text, which is best supported, implies the defiant *willingness* of their iniquity, in that the heathen, while they *knew* the sentence of God, deliberately *ignored* it by their actions. The various reading only *points* the antithesis, "*Knowing, they ignored* that," &c. This is the exact reading of G, and is in entire accordance with St. Paul's style. If we accept the reading as possibly genuine, its omission from so many good MSS. may be accounted for by the bold oxymoron which also led other MSS. to read, "did not *perceive*," or, "did not *understand*." But such passages as Romans i. 20; xii. 11; 1 Thes-

salonians iv. 11 (in the Greek), shew us that oxymoron (the effective contrast of words apparently opposite, as in Shakespeare's—

Dove-feather'd raven, fiend angelical)

was one of the rhetorical figures in which the intensity of the Apostle's mind found natural expression.

3. Romans ii. 17: Our Received Text has, "*Behold* (*ιδε*) thou art called a Jew," &c. This is only the reading of one good uncial, though found in some of the Fathers, and in the Syriac Version. It is a point in which the testimony of MSS. is of little importance, because of what is called *itacism*, *i.e.*, the pronunciation of *η* and *ει* as though they were *ι*. There cannot however be the shadow of a doubt that the true reading is, "*But if* (*ει δε*) thou art called a Jew." Bearing in mind the intense and admirable, yet perfectly courteous and kindly, sarcasm of the picture of a Jewish Pharisee in this paragraph of the Epistle, the reader will see at once with what far more crushing force the half-veiled irony bursts into terribly plain interrogative, by the substitution of the true reading. The passage is then as follows: "*But if* thou proudly bearest the name of Jew, and makest thy pillow of the law, and thy boast in God, and dost recognize the will (omit 'his'), and discriminate things transcendent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thyself art a leader of blind men, a light of them in darkness, an instructor of fools, a teacher of babes, having a form of knowledge and of truth in the law"—then, breaking off the assumption by a fine and common idiom, he suddenly confounds the highly self-satisfied Sir-oracle by the awful charges: "Thou then that teachest another, dost thou not teach thyself? Preacher against theft, art thou a thief? For-

bidder of adultery, art thou an adulterer? Loather of idols, dost thou rob temples?"

4. Passing over the numerous but not specially significant variations in Romans iv. 1, we may notice that in Chapter iv. 19 the true reading probably is, "And not being weak in faith *he considered his own body already deadened*, being about a hundred years old, but as to the promise of God he doubted it not through unbelief." Our Version follows the reading, "He considered *not* his own body," &c.; but this is, on the one hand, in disaccord with fact, for Abraham we are told¹ *did expressly call attention* both to his own extreme age and the deadness of Sarah's womb; and, on the other hand, it seems to give a less forcible aspect to the power of Abraham's faith. The omission therefore of the negative (οὐ) in s, A, B, C, and the Coptic and Syriac Versions, if not an absolutely *certain* reading, is one which is at least extremely probable.

5. In Romans v. 1, we come to one of those variations about which it is almost impossible to feel any confidence. Should the reading be, "Being then justified by faith, *we have peace* towards God," or, "*let us have peace*"? The latter reading is very strongly supported. It is found in s, A, B, C, D, K, in at least three important Versions, and in a number of the Fathers. This is however exactly an instance in which *diplomatic* evidence is almost valueless, because (1) the carelessness of pronunciation which prevails in the decadence of a language repeatedly obliterates the distinction between *o* and *ω*, so that there would be little difference in sound between "we have" (ἐχόμεν) and "let us have" (ἐχωμεν); and (2) there seems to have been a liturgical

¹ Gen. xvii. 17.

tendency "to improve an assertion into an ethical exhortation." Since then the exhortation is here ruinous to the sense of an argumentative passage, we shall probably be right in following E, F, G, in this instance, and retaining the reading adopted in our English Version. We find similar specimens of this error (whether due to itacism or to a hortative tendency) in Romans vi. 2, 8, 17; 1 Corinthians xv. 7, 9, &c.

6. In Romans vii. 6, our Version has, "But now we are delivered from the law, *that being dead* wherein we were held." The reading here followed is ἀποθάνοντος, which seems to have *no MS. authority at all*, but to be a mere conjectural emendation of Beza's to simplify the construction. The true reading almost certainly is ἀποθάνοντες—"We are delivered, *having died to that in which* we were held." D, E, F, G, read, "We are delivered from the law *of death* (τοῦ θανάτου) in which we were held;" which yields an easy sense, but has against it the almost unanimous testimony of the Versions. The variations are here simply due to the difficulty and brevity of the construction; but it is a rule of criticism that *faciliori lectioni præstat ardua: i.e.*, when the evidence between two constructions is evenly balanced *the more difficult is almost certainly the genuine reading*. Scribes are often tempted to remove, but never tempted to create, a difficulty.

7. In Romans vii. 25, our Version has, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? *I thank God* (εὐχαριστῶ) through Jesus Christ our Lord." It will be observed that the Apostle does not answer his own question, but in the rush of thought only implies the answer in the thanksgiving. Owing to this, some MSS. read, *The grace of God* (D, E, F, G). Here again we

apply the rule to which we have just alluded, that the more difficult construction is, *ceteris paribus*, to be preferred. The true reading probably is, *Thanks to God* (χάρις τῷ θεῷ).

8. The variations in the rendering of Romans ix. 5, are very remarkable, but depend on the punctuation rather than the reading. Our Version adopts the punctuation, "*Of whom according to the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.*" Here many commentators would put the full stop at "over all," and make the rest of the sentence an ejaculation. If the rendering of our Version were *demonstrably* correct, the verse would be absolutely decisive against all Socinian views. That it is correct I myself believe; because (1) it is the most natural way of taking the words; because (2) it was so understood by the early Church; and because (3) in all liturgical ascriptions to God the Father, the word "blessed" (ἐυλογητός) comes *before*, and not (as here) *after*, the word "God" in the original. But since in *most* uncials there is no punctuation worth speaking of, and in some cursives the stop is placed after "according to the flesh," so as to make the following words an utterance of praise (*God who is over all be blessed for ever!*); and since Julian positively asserted that Paul has nowhere directly called Jesus God; many eminent modern commentators reject the punctuation of our Authorized Version. Whichever view be adopted, the proofs from the New Testament of our Lord's Divinity are far too overwhelming to be in the least affected by the decision.

9. In Romans xi. 6, the latter half of the verse—"*But if of works, it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work*"—is probably a *marginal gloss*, which

has crept into the text, being omitted by κ , A, C, D, E, F, G, and several important Versions. It might easily have been written by some thoughtful reader to complete the symmetry of the antithesis; but had it really come from the Apostle, it is most unlikely that any copyist would have ventured to omit it.

10. In Romans xii. 11, "Serving *the Lord*" ($\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\omega}$) is certainly correct. Another reading (D, F, G) is, "Serving *the opportunity*" ($\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{\omega}$), like the Latin phrase, *tempori inservire*—"to seize the occasion"—which may be compared with Ephesians v. 16, "buying up the opportunity." But the reading of the text is not only the best supported, but also yields the best sense, and the variations very likely arose from merely mistaking the abbreviation $\overline{\kappa\rho\omega}$, or $\overline{\kappa\omega}$, for $\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{\omega}$, instead of $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\omega}$.

11. The Verse, Romans xiii. 5, offers some interesting readings. Our Version reads, "*It is necessary to submit ourselves*" ($\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\gamma\kappa\eta\ \upsilon\pi\omicron\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$); but D, E, F, G, perhaps from the hortative tendency, read, *Submit yourselves* ($\upsilon\pi\omicron\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$), and there are traces of the reading, $\nu\acute{\alpha}\gamma\kappa\eta\ \upsilon\pi\omicron\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$ (*You are subject to necessity*). In questions affected by *itacism*, the evidence of MSS. becomes merely orthographical, and the Received Text is probably right.

12. In Romans xiv. 6, we have one of those nicely balanced questions of reading in which the diplomatic and internal evidence are in conflict. "He that regardeth the day, to the Lord he regardeth it." Those words St. Paul dictated to Tertius; but did he add the other half of the antithesis—"and he who regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it"? If we went solely by the authority of the MSS., we should say at once that these words are not genuine, but arise

from one of those pragmatic glosses which are not unfrequently added by readers peculiarly alive to a sense of literary symmetry. For the clause is entirely omitted by $\aleph$, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, by some of the Versions, and by many of the Fathers. And yet, in spite of this apparently overwhelming authority against it, the sentence is almost certainly genuine, because it is more difficult to account for its insertion than for its omission. If it be said that it might be inserted because any positive statement of a truth naturally suggests a negative statement of the same truth, we must, on the other hand, observe that the clause savours of that bold liberty in which St. Paul towers above whole generations of his followers. The *omission* of the clause may have been due (1) to the accident which is constantly caused by what is called *homoteleuton* ("when a clause ends with the same word as the preceding clause, and the transcriber's eye wanders from the one to the other, to the omission of the whole passage lying between"). The fact, then, that both clauses end with the same Greek word ($\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}$), may have misled the copyist.¹ But perhaps (2) the clause was suppressed in the lectionaries owing to dogmatic prejudice, because it may have been thought that the words diminished the obligation of observing the Christian holy days. Considering the structure of the entire verse, and the *extreme unlikelihood that any early scribe would insert so thoroughly Pauline an assertion of Christian liberty*, it seems to me certain, in spite of uncial, Versions, and Fathers, that the clause is genuine.

13. Romans xvi. 5: "Epænetus, who is *the first-fruits of Achaia*." Here our Version has followed a

¹ For similar instances of clauses perhaps omitted by *homoteleuton*, see 1 John ii. 23; Luke xvii. 36.

reading which is probably a mere *error of memory* on the part of some early transcriber. Stephanas, not Epænetus, was "the first-fruits of Achaia." The true reading is, undoubtedly, "of Asia" (ⲥ, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and most of the Versions). It is interesting to know the name of the first convert in the Churches of Asia, and it is more probable that he would be mentioned and saluted in a letter to Ephesus (if the hypothesis about Romans xvi., to which I have alluded, be correct) than in a letter addressed to Rome.

I hope that these specimens of various readings, the questions which they suggest, and the principles of criticism on which the selection of the true reading depends, will not have been without interest. There are, of course, multitudes of other readings in this Epistle to which I might have alluded. I have contented myself with selecting instances which appear to be more or less typical in their character, and which may serve to give the general reader some glimpse into the subject. I may perhaps be able in a future paper to call attention to important readings in the rest of St. Paul's Epistles. Even those who have minutely studied the Greek Testament may not dislike to hear a perfectly unbiassed opinion; and there may be many readers of THE EXPOSITOR who, by noticing these questions, may be led to await with deeper and more sympathetic interest the forthcoming revision of the New Testament which, in all probability, is destined even to supersede that dear and celebrated Authorized Version which now, for two centuries, has lived on the ear like a music which can never be forgotten; into which the memory of the dead has passed, and in whose verses the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped.

F. W. FARRAR.

THE ATONEMENT.—AN ILLUSTRATION.

PHILEMON 18, 19.

ONESIMUS was one of many slaves in the service of Philemon, a wealthy and generous householder of Colosse, who had himself been won to the love and service of Christ by the ministry of St. Paul. This just and kind master had been defrauded by Onesimus—robbed of money or of money's worth. To escape the due reward of his deed, Onesimus fled to Rome with his ill-gotten gains, and probably wasted them, or was himself defrauded of them, in some of the vile dens of vice with which the imperial city abounded. When he came to be in want, he was led by a gracious Providence to the hut, or shed, in which the great Apostle was imprisoned, and was there brought to repentance and faith in Christ. In due time St. Paul thought it well to send him back to the master he had wronged, that he might make some atonement for his crime; but he also thought well to send a letter by him to Philemon, in which he announced the happy change that had passed on Onesimus, besought his master to receive him “no longer as a slave, but as a brother beloved,” and offered out of his own scanty means to reimburse Philemon for any loss he had sustained by the crime of his “unprofitable” slave.

This, in brief, is the story related or implied in this Epistle, which is the only *private* letter of St. Paul's that we now possess. And now, before we go a step further, let me ask my reader to consider carefully whether, in St. Paul's offer to pay the debt of Onesimus, the fraudulent but repentant slave, he finds anything worthy of blame? Was it base and wrong of

him? was it not rather very noble and generous of him, thus to put himself in the place of Onesimus, to take his debt on him, to atone for his wrong? We know that St. Paul was poor, that he had to work with his hands in order to earn a scanty wage. Suppose, then, that Philemon had *demanded* the repayment of what he had lost to the uttermost farthing; suppose that for many months St. Paul had had to work very hard, and to live very sparsely, in order to earn the required sum, and that at last he had actually paid it to the rich Philemon, in order that Onesimus might be got out of his debt: would *that* have been wrong and base? wrong *of St. Paul*, I mean. Would you, would any man, have blamed him for it? Would you not, rather, have been moved to an enthusiastic admiration of the man who was capable of so singular and so signal an act of self-forgetting generosity and compassion? Would not his name have been enrolled, by common consent, in the list of worthies who have deserved the admiration and praise of their fellows?

And what would you have thought of Philemon *if he had taken the money*? Surely you would have been as quick to condemn him as to admire Paul. "Owing even his own soul to St. Paul," you would have said, "this rich Colossian householder ought to have been ashamed to let the aged Apostle, poor and in prison, exhaust himself by working night and day in order to repay him a sum which he could very well afford to lose." You would have had nothing but contempt for Philemon, nothing but reverence and admiration for Paul. It is precisely because you have every reason to believe Philemon to have been a good and honourable man, that you feel quite sure he did *not* take the

money, although you have no other proof that he refused it.

"Which things may be allegorized." Let us, then, for our instruction in righteousness, turn this story into an allegory or parable. Let Philemon, the just and kind master, stand for God, our Father and Lord. Let St. Paul, the generous debt-assuming Apostle, stand for Christ, our Saviour. Let Onesimus, the fraudulent and runaway slave, stand for man, the sinner. And then, sinful man, fleeing from the God he has wronged, falls into the hands of Christ, and comes to know and hate his sins—just as Onesimus, fleeing from Philemon, fell into the hands of Paul, and was brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. Christ goes to the Father, as St. Paul wrote to Philemon, saying: "*If he (i.e., man) hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that to my account; I will repay it.*" And, according to one theory of the Atonement at least, God takes the money; He demands that Christ should exhaust Himself with toil and suffering in order that man's debt may be paid, and then blots out the debt from his account.

Assuming for a moment this theory of the Atonement to be a true theory, what are we to think of Christ? Was it wrong, was it blameworthy of Him to take the sinner's place, to pay the sinner's debt, to atone the sinner's offence? If we hold to our parallel, so far from thinking it wrong, we can only pronounce it an unparalleled act of generous and self-forgetting love: so far from blaming Him for it, we can but honour and admire Him for it with all our hearts, just as we honour and admire St. Paul for undertaking to pay the debt of Onesimus.

But *if God took the money*—if He would not release man from his debt till some one, no matter who, had paid the debt—what are we to think of *Him*? Had Philemon taken St. Paul's money, we agreed that in him it would have been an action almost incredibly mean and base; we agreed that we should have felt nothing for him but contempt. Are we to lower our standard, and alter our verdict, because it is God, and not man, who is called in question—God, from whom we expect, and have a right to expect, so much more than from man? No, we cannot, we dare not, either lower our standard or alter our verdict. What would have been wrong in man would have been at least equally wrong in God. And as God can do no wrong, either our parallel does not hold good, or *this* theory of the Atonement must be radically misleading and incomplete.

Is the parallel at fault, then? Look at it again. Philemon was a just and kind master. And does not God Himself claim to hold a similar relation to us? Does He not expostulate with us, "If I be a master, where is mine honour?" Is not He most just, and yet most kind—"forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," yet by no means "sparing the guilty," lest they should sink into still deeper guilt and misery?

Onesimus was an "unprofitable" servant—running away from a master he had robbed. And have not *we* again and again robbed God of his due, and left his service to walk after our own lusts? *Are* we not, even the best of us, but unprofitable servants?

St. Paul loved Onesimus "as his own heart," "as himself" (Verses 12 and 17); and, in his love, he even put himself in the place of Onesimus, assumed his debt,

interceded for him with his justly offended master, and raised him from the status of a slave to that of a "brother beloved." Are there any words, even in the Bible itself, which more accurately and happily describe Christ's relation to us? Did not He love all men, even the worst, as Himself, as his own heart? Did He not take our place, bear our burden, assume, and even pay, our debt? Did He not intercede with our Master for us, and bring us to a better mind, and raise us, who were but servants, to be his brethren and friends?

The parallel holds good then. We *may* take Philemon as setting forth God's relation to us, Onesimus as setting forth our relation to God, and St. Paul as setting forth Christ's relation both to God and man. But as the parallel does hold good, must not that theory of the Atonement to which I have referred be radically misleading and incomplete?

No doubt *any* theory of the Atonement must be incomplete, for the Atonement is the reconciliation of man to God; and which of us fully comprehends either God or man? How, then, can we comprehend and express that Divine act or process, "that miracle of time," by which the relations of God with man and of man with God were, or are being, drawn into an eternal concord? No theory of the Atonement conceived by the human mind, and expressed in human words, can possibly be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. The great "mystery of godliness" must ever remain a deep, "in which all our thoughts are drowned." And any man who assumes that he can comprehend it, and crush it into some narrow and portable formula, does but prove that he pertains to that well-known category

or class which presumes to "rush in where angels fear to tread."

Still we may refuse to hold any theory of the Atonement which is obviously untenable. We may know, we may learn from Scripture at least enough of the Atonement for faith to grasp, and for the salvation that comes by faith. And, surely, it is impossible to deny that in sundry places Scripture does teach what is known as the vicarious or substitutionary theory of the Atonement; that it speaks of Christ as taking our place, paying our debt, suffering in our stead. St. Paul himself speaks again and again of our debts or sins as being counted or imputed to Christ, and of the grace of Christ as being imputed to us for righteousness. And to many minds this language, not unnaturally, gives grave offence. Men say, it is natural that they should say: "Every man must bear his own burden, and answer to God for himself. No man can by any means appear and answer for his brother. It is a mere verbal juggle to talk of our sins as being laid on Christ, and of his righteousness as being imputed to us. Sin and righteousness are moral qualities, or conditions, inherent in the very nature of a man, inseparable from him, except by his own act and will. The innocent cannot take the place and assume the responsibilities of the guilty, nor can the guilty be acquitted for the sake of the righteous." And yet the very men who say this, and say it with sincerity, are often the first to admire such an action as that of St. Paul. They find no moral impossibility in his putting himself in the place of Onesimus. They attach no moral stigma to his request that the debt of Onesimus may be charged to his account. They would have no word of blame for Philemon if they knew that,

at first, he forgave and loved Onesimus for Paul's sake, rather than for his own. Often they would be the very first to laud and admire any man who, moved by a fine generosity like that of the Apostle, should sacrifice himself to serve, or save, a neighbour. Does, then, that which was noble in the man Paul become ignoble in the man Christ Jesus? If we admire St. Paul, and are bound to admire him, for taking on himself the offence of *one* man, may we not admire Him who took on Himself the offences of *all* men? If we hold the self-sacrifice of love to be the very top and crown of human virtue, are we to carp at the Cross, and to question the love which led Christ to sacrifice Himself for the sin of the world? Is St. Paul to be commended for saying to the master of Onesimus, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that to my account;" and Christ to be condemned for saying to the Master of us all, "If they have wronged Thee, or owe Thee ought, put *that* to *my* account; I will repay it"?

But, say some, "Consider the bad moral effect of your doctrine. If you go to a man, and say to him, 'You need not strive to be quit of sin, nor need you fear that you will receive the due reward, the natural consequences, of your sins. *Christ* suffered for them. He paid your debt, and atoned for your transgressions. And if you believe that, you will be accounted righteous for his sake.' If you say that to a man, you lower his moral tone, confuse his moral conceptions; you obscure and teach him to disregard the eternal distinctions between right and wrong; you make him careless, or less careful, whether he do evil or good. Why should he oppose himself to evil with all his force, if his sins are to be forgiven him in virtue of the sacrifice of Christ?"

Consider it! It is precisely because I *have* considered it, and found it untrue to the facts of human life and experience, that I recognize without reluctance the presence in the New Testament of this vicarious and substitutionary view of the Divine Sacrifice of the Cross. Whether we like it or not, there it is: the writings of St. Paul are full of it. Whatever the moral effect of it were, candour would compel us to confess that this aspect of Christ's work and ministry of reconciliation *is* set forth in the Scriptures of the Apostles—not as the *only* aspect, only, indeed, as one of three or four, but still as a true aspect, as demanding our acceptance. Nevertheless, I confess that I for one should hesitate to accept it, were I unable to see and to shew that the proper moral effect of it is not evil, but good; that it does not tend to weaken our hatred of sin, or to relax our struggle against it, but tends rather to strengthen our hatred of it, and to brace us for new endeavours to overcome it. And I value this story of Onesimus very highly because it suggests a reasonable and a complete answer to this common difficulty and objection.

For, consider: Was St. Paul's offer to pay the debt of Onesimus in the very least degree likely to confirm Onesimus in his knavery? Suppose the offer accepted; suppose he had seen the busy and weary Apostle toiling night and day, suffering many additional hardships, in order to clear him of his debt—would Onesimus, after having thus seen what his crime had cost, have been the more likely to rob Philemon again? Would that have been *the natural and proper effect* on his mind of the Apostle's generous and self-sacrificing love for him? We know very well that it would not. We

know very well that Onesimus, touched and melted by the love St. Paul had shewn him, would rather have starved than shew himself wholly unworthy of it. Why, then, if we believe that Christ Jesus, in the greatness of his love, took our place, paid our debt, toiled and suffered for our sins, and so reconciled us to the God we had wronged—why should *that* have a bad moral effect upon us? Why should it obscure the eternal distinctions between right and wrong in our minds? Why make us careless how often we repeat our sins? If we are men at all, and have discourse of reason, and any touch of pure and noble emotion in us, or any susceptibility to it, we shall rather hate the sin for which He suffered more because *He* has suffered by it than because we ourselves have also suffered by it; we shall rather resolve to bear any pain, to make any sacrifice of passion and appetite, than shew ourselves wholly unworthy of a love so tender and yet so strong, so human and yet so Divine. If Christ so loved us as to give Himself for us, the just for the unjust; if we clearly and honestly believe that, surely its proper moral effect on us will be that we shall love Him who so loved us: and how can we love Him, and yet not hate the evil that caused Him so much pain?

But here we come back to a still graver difficulty. As St. Paul, to Philemon, for Onesimus, so Christ says, to God, for us, "If they have wronged Thee, or owe Thee ought, put that to my account; I will repay it." Let it be granted, as I have tried to shew, that this assumption of our place and debt by Christ Jesus was an act most noble and generous and divine. Let it be granted, as I have also tried to shew, that by our faith

in his great love we are incited to more strenuous efforts after moral purity and righteousness, instead of being degraded and demoralized by it. Grant both these points : and, then, what are we to think of *God* if He took from Christ the money which paid our debt ? We agreed at the outset that had the wealthy Philemon suffered the poor Apostle to work out the debt of Onesimus, he would have shewn a nature so sordid and base as justly to expose him to our contempt. And there are many who say : “ This vicarious theory of the Atonement, even though it be found in the New Testament, renders God Himself contemptible, and therefore we cannot but reject it. It is wholly incredible to us that a Being so just and good should permit the substitution of the innocent for the guilty—that He should take the obedience of Jesus Christ the Righteous as a quittance for the disobedience of an unrighteous world. Had Christ ever said to Him, ‘ Put that to my account ; I will repay it ; ’ God, like Philemon, would have refused to accept payment ; He would have freely forgiven the sinful world.”

There is much force in this objection, and some truth. For, beyond all question, we do dishonour God when we degrade the Atonement into a mere mercantile transaction, a mere affair of debt and credit. All that series of Scriptural figures which represents our sins as debts, and the Father Almighty as keeping a book in which they are entered, and as blotting them from that book when they are paid, may be necessary, and may once have been still more necessary than it is now, to set forth certain aspects of spiritual truth. It *must* have been necessary, or we should not find it in the Bible. But we need not conceive of God’s book

as though it were a ledger, nor of God Himself as a keen hard-eyed merchant, still less as a peddling huckster, indifferent where his money comes from so that He gets it, and gets enough of it. All *this* is not in the Bible, though it may be in certain creeds and systems of divinity which, although they "have had their day," have not even yet altogether "ceased to be." And even the mercantile and forensic metaphors which *are* in the Bible are but metaphors after all; *i. e.*, they are but human forms of Divine truth adapted to the weakness and grossness of our perceptions. Nor do they stand alone. Lest we should misinterpret them, they stand side by side with figures and words which set forth other aspects of the self-same truth in forms we cannot easily mistake. Recall and consider, for example, such sayings as these:—"God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might have eternal life:" and again, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself:" and again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that *he* loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Are not *these* words sufficiently simple and clear and direct? Are they not instinct—charged and surcharged—with a Divine tenderness? Do *they* call up in our minds the image of a merchant, with lowering brows and greedy eyes, demanding his ducats or his pound of flesh, and for ever crying out, "My bond, my bond! Is it not written in the bond?"

But if these sacred and tender words be true; if God *was* in Christ, if He against whom we had sinned *Himself* took our debt upon Him, that He might frankly forgive us all, is there any lack of love and

kindness in Him then ? “ It was noble in St. Paul,” you admit, “ to take the debt of Onesimus upon him ; but it would have been ignoble of Philemon to let the Apostle pay it.” Granted. But suppose—for even impossibilities are supposable—that St. Paul had been both himself *and* Philemon. Suppose that when, in the form of Philemon, he had been robbed at Colosse, he forthwith posted to Rome in order that, in the form of St. Paul, he might bring Onesimus to repentance, in order that, at any cost of toil and suffering to himself, he might wipe out his debt and atone his wrong. Would not that have been nobler still ?

And if God, the very God whom we had defrauded, from whom we had fled, *Himself* came down into our low and miserable estate, to toil and suffer with us and for us, in order that He might bring us back to our better selves and to Him, in order that He might wipe out the debt we had contracted, convince us that He had remitted it, and raise us to a new life of service and favour and peace—what was that but a love so pure, so generous, so divine, that the mere thought of it should melt and purify our hearts ?

We are to think of God, then, not simply as *taking* the money offered Him by Christ on our behalf, but also as *paying* it ; not as exacting his due to the uttermost farthing, but rather as Himself discharging a debt we could never have paid. In the terms of our parable, He *is* Paul as well as Philemon—not only the Master we have wronged, but also the Friend who takes the wrong upon Himself. And we owe to Him both whatever service and duty the forgiven Onesimus owed to Philemon, and whatever gratitude and love he felt for St. Paul. If we think thus of God, assuredly

our view of the Atonement will neither degrade Him nor demoralize us, but will rather impel us to devote ourselves with new fervour to his service. For just as the once unprofitable but now penitent slave, on his return to Colosse, would strive to become very profitable to his master, both because he had once wronged him, and because he would thus please the Apostle who had reclaimed and befriended him; so we, if we believe in the forgiving love of God as revealed in his Son, cannot but give ourselves with new ardour to his service, both because we were sometime sinners against Him, and because we know that we shall thus please Him who died for our sins that we might be reconciled unto God.

In this simple story, then, we find an argument which clears away some of the perplexities which obscure our poor and partial conceptions of the Atonement wrought by Christ. But we ought also to find in it an appeal that shall touch and move our hearts. For if God *so* loved us, then surely

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands our love, our life, our all.

S. E. C. T.

BRIEF NOTICES.

WHEN the first volume of *Bishop Ellicott's* NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY FOR ENGLISH READERS (Cassell and Co.) appeared, we hailed it as the very best of its kind, as the greatest boon yet offered to unlearned students of the Word of God. With natural disappointment and reluctance we have now to report that the second volume is not, on the whole, up to the high level of the first. In parts it is as good as heart could wish. Professor Plumptre has evidently found his true vocation. His expositions of Scripture shew that he is never so happy as when tracing an author's meaning from word to word, from clause to clause, from sentence to sentence, through a long and

connected writing, and under such constraints of space as compel him to study form and proportion. He has a rare gift for seizing on fine distinctions of thought, for detecting and grasping the subtler shades of meaning and intention in words or collocations of words. And with this gift he combines another almost as rare, that of bringing together, from the most distant and unexpected quarters, facts and phrases and usages of speech which illustrate the passage he has in hand. Whatever he has to say, moreover, he says in simple flexible English, while yet he can be as terse and compressed as he is select and happy in his style. And, no doubt, his wide study of the Bible, extending over most of the Scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New, and his long practice in authorship, contribute largely to the confidence and ease with which he moves. It is impossible to read his expositions of the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* in this volume without being afresh impressed with the conviction that, as an expositor for English readers, he stands almost unrivalled. His "Introduction" to the Acts, for example, is a model in its comprehensiveness, brevity, and delicacy of touch, to all who labour in the same field.

To assign the great theological treatise of the New Testament—the *Epistle to the Romans*—and that other Epistle—*Galatians*—which also contains an elaborate theological argument, to Dr. Sanday was hardly wise. Dr. Sanday has won his honours—and they are of the highest—in the school of criticism. Few men are happier than he in dealing with the critical and historical questions suggested by the New Testament Scriptures. But in theology he is comparatively, or at least he writes like, a novice; nor has he gained by long practice the special skill, or trick, of the skilled expositor. Hence, while his Introductions to both the Epistles assigned him are admirable, his exposition of them is questionable, and will no doubt be questioned by many of the ablest theologians of the day. He does not move among the "doctrines" stated or suggested by St. Paul with ease and freedom. His handling of them lacks force, his solutions breadth. Nor is he of the same theological school with Professors Plumptre and Watkins; and hence he introduces a discord into the tones of this Commentary which the learned editor seems to have taken no pains to reduce, much less to resolve.

The great mistake of this volume lies, however, and we say so with unfeigned regret, in assigning the *First Epistle to the Corinthians* to a man so busily occupied and preoccupied—as pastor, editor, preacher, chaplain—as the Rev. T. Teignmouth Shore. It really is

not difficult for any scholar with leisure at his command to write a respectable commentary on this Epistle, for none has been more frequently and ably discussed. But it is only too evident that Mr. Shore has not had sufficient leisure at his command to enable him to give us his best work. His exposition lacks the erudition, the scholarship, the grasp and breadth of thought, which would have brought it up to the level of the other contributions to this great work.

REUSS'S BIBLE.¹—The full title, given below, of the work to which Professor Reuss has devoted himself, sufficiently indicates its magnitude and importance. Hitherto, it seems, little has been done in this way for the service of French Protestantism. Commentaries upon single books of Scripture, original or translations, have been issued from the press during the last thirty years, but they have been modelled for the most part after the German type, and bristle with Greek and Hebrew quotations which repel the general reader. M. Reuss aims to do for the more intelligent Protestants of France what the "Speaker's Commentary" essays to do for a similar class in this country, but with this difference, that his aim and methods are more purely literary. The exposition is limited to putting the reader in possession of the meaning of the sacred text, without any attempt at edifying comment.

All who have made the acquaintance of M. Reuss through his "History of the Christian Theology of the Apostolic Age," will be ready to admit that he possesses high qualifications for the task he has undertaken. His scholarship and exegetical tact place him in the front rank of living commentators, and while his rationalistic point of view often leads him to conclusions from which the readers of THE EXPOSITOR will dissent, this does not detract very seriously from the value of his labours, since he commonly supplies the materials by which his errors may be corrected.

A translation of the entire Scriptures, with an accompanying comment from one mind, however richly stored and fully equipped for the task, may not seem to promise very valuable results. No man is equally at home in Greek and in Hebrew, in poetry and in prose; nor can any man so master the whole range of Scripture as to warrant

¹ *La Bible nouvellement traduite sur les textes originaux, avec une introduction à chaque livre, des notes explicatives sur l'ancien Testament, et un commentaire complet sur le nouveau Testament* ("The Bible newly translated from the Original Texts, with an Introduction to each book, Explanatory Notes upon the Old, and a complete Commentary upon the New, Testament"). Paris: Sandoz and Fischbacher,

him in writing a Commentary on the whole Bible. On the other hand, a certain homogeneousness of aim and equality of execution are secured when the task of translating and annotating the Bible is essayed by a great scholar like De Wette or Reuss. This Bible is published by subscription, and the fact that it has already secured more than 1,100 subscribers, of various religious opinions, in different parts of Europe, whose names are published in periodical lists, is a proof of the estimation in which the Strasbourg professor is held, and of the expectations which his undertaking has excited.

The plan of the work is sufficiently original and curious to deserve being given entire. Even M. Reuss anticipates that it will surprise some of his readers. It shews how the literary spirit predominates in his work. After a *Preface and General Introduction*, the OLD TESTAMENT is laid out as follows:—First Part: *History of the Israelites from the Conquest of Palestine to the Exile* (Judges, Samuel, and Kings), one vol. Second Part: *The Prophets* (in chronological order), two vols. Third Part: * *The Sacred History of the Law* (Pentateuch and Joshua). Fourth Part: *The Ecclesiastical Chronicles of Jerusalem* (Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah), one vol. Fifth Part: *Lyrical Poetry*—First Section: *The Psalter*; Second Section: *Lamentations*, one vol.; * *Canticles* will form the Third Section of this part. Sixth Part: *Religious and Moral Philosophy* (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, Moral Tales, Baruch &c.). Seventh Part: * *Political and Polemical Literature* (Ruth, Maccabees, Daniel, Esther, Judith, &c.).—The NEW TESTAMENT is distributed thus:—First Part: *The Gospel History* (Synopsis of the first three Gospels), one vol. Second Part: *The Apostolic History* (Acts of the Apostles), one vol. Third Part: *The Pauline Epistles*, two vols. Fourth Part: *The Apocalypse*. Fifth Part: * *The Epistles to the Hebrews, James, Peter, and Jude*. Sixth Part: * *The Johanneine Theology* (Gospel and Epistles).—Of these, those marked with an asterisk have not yet appeared. The work was commenced in 1874, and will probably be completed by the end of this year. It incorporates several smaller works previously published. The price of the whole is not to exceed one hundred francs. There will be about fourteen volumes of five hundred pages octavo.

The need of a new French translation of the Bible is very generally acknowledged by the Protestant Churches. It is only justice to M. Reuss, however, to say that he has entertained no idea of displacing by his work the time-honoured versions now in use. As he justly observes, "Exegesis is a science of too recent date in France

for the Church to be in a position to accept a new Bible from the hand of the first comer." His aim has been simply "to render service in the more modest sphere of the closet, and wherever a desire may exist for thorough and consecutive instruction upon the form and matter of the Scriptures." In the execution of the translation his object has been to give the exact sense of the original: style has been a secondary consideration. M. Reuss's mother-tongue is German, and his French is somewhat deficient in colour and vividness: but his version is lucid and flowing. His observations upon the happy mean to be observed between literalness and grace of style in translating such a book as the Bible seem to hit the mark exactly, and one can only hope that the spirit of them is controlling the work of our own Revisers. He says: "A translation must, of course, be faithful; but its fidelity consists in giving the reader of to-day a similar impression to that formerly received by a contemporary who spoke the language of the author. Now, the translator would miss this mark if he clung to the letter of an idiom entirely different from our own, and would actually create new difficulties for those he desired to assist in understanding the text, difficulties which probably would have no existence for the scholar. On the other hand, he must not forget that he has to deal with ancient documents, which, while they serve the wants of modern generations, belong, nevertheless, to history, and demand, on this ground alone, respect and discretion. In translating the Bible, the object is, not simply to propagate religious ideas and inculcate precepts of morality—this may be done in many other ways, without diminishing the native truth and intrinsic power of Biblical teaching—but to reveal the source whence this truth is drawn, and the particular form in which this power was first manifested. There are limits, then, to a translator's license. His work must present, not, certainly, a mere counterpart of Hebraic or Hellenistic syntax, which could only repel the reader, but a reflection of the original and authentic conception of the ancient authors, the faithful reproduction of their literary physiognomy—in a word, the image of their style. For, as between their time and ours, it is not only language that has changed; there is also a very perceptible difference in the working of the mind, in forms of thought and methods of instruction. There are images borrowed from remote scenes, allusions to conditions of society which no longer exist, figures of rhetoric scattered broadcast over even the simplest prose, bold flights of a poetry which is at once foreign and natural, and very many other things besides, which enter into the peculiar

genius of sacred literature, and which by turns arrest attention and call forth sympathy, shock our taste or awaken our admiration. A rendering which, in order to make the text easily intelligible to ordinary readers, obliterated these characteristic features, beating out into circumlocutions the crisp and pictorial diction of the original, would not deserve the name of translation."

The Introductions which M. Reuss has supplied to the several books are exceedingly instructive, and valuable, moreover, as furnishing an easily accessible account of the latest views entertained upon the date, authorship, and contents of the several sacred books by the school which claims to exercise the higher criticism. The easy and confident step with which M. Reuss sometimes advances along what seems to us, even from a literary point of view, a perilous path, is a wonder to see. The *naïveté* of his dogmatism is amusing, and reminds one of Bunsen's achievements in Egyptology, related in his memoirs, when a single morning's work sufficed to find the solution of some of its most intricate problems. To take an instance from the Introduction to the Apocalypse. The question to be determined is the date of the book, and "this is how it is done."

"The capital built upon seven hills can be no other than Rome, which the Romans themselves loved to designate in this way. Its kings are the Roman emperors. Our author writes during the reign of the sixth, the first five belonging already to the past. After Augustus, Tiberius, Caius, Claudius, and Nero, we come to Galba. The total number of the emperors being determined by the analogy of the hills and of the heads (of the beast), and the duration of the empire, from the time at which the author was writing to the final catastrophe, being fixed, according to Daniel, at three years and a half (Chap. xi. 2, 3; xii. 14), and in a more general way in this book by the expression 'at hand' (Chap. i. 3, 4), we see at once how the author could say that the seventh king would only remain a little while, without inferring therefrom any reference to the historical event of Otho's reign (*supposed to be beyond his horizon*). The Apocalypse, then, was written in the reign of Galba, that is to say, in the interval between these two epochs—the time when the death of Nero, which happened on the 9th of June, 68, could be known in Asia, and the death of Galba, slain on the 16th of January, 69."

The riddle of the Apocalypse, the number of the beast, is solved, by scholars of M. Renan's school, by the name of Nero, taken in its Hebrew form. Professor Reuss treats this solution as a literary de-

monstration. While, however, he insists upon this as the meaning of the writer of the Apocalypse, he is obliged, of course, to admit that its predictions, interpreted in this sense, were falsified as soon as they were published. But see what the whole theory involves. Only six months elapse between the deaths of Nero and of Galba. During this brief interval, the report had to obtain currency in the Church that Nero was not really dead, but would reappear as Antichrist, and this rumour had to reach an obscure Christian at Ephesus, and become the motive of an elaborate apocalyptic work of the most intricate structure, and full of symbolical images, drawn chiefly from the Old Testament, but worked out with great minuteness of detail. No one could shew more successfully than M. Reuss has shewn the unity of this book, the elaborate skill with which it is constructed, and the degree to which it is saturated with Old Testament imagery; yet we are to believe that it was conceived, composed, and published beyond recall, within the brief interval of its author's first hearing of the death of Nero and the news reaching him of the subsequent death of Galba! This is just an example of how Professor Reuss's work sometimes supplies materials for refuting his own conclusions.

But it would be a very false impression of the value of these Introductions to infer that the kind of work just indicated is a predominating feature of them. The Introduction to the Book of Ecclesiastes, which will have a special interest for readers of *THE EXPOSITOR* this year, is full of information and sound reasoning: not less so the Introduction to Proverbs. Indeed, this remark is true even of the Introduction to the Apocalypse, to part of which exception has just been taken.

The Notes to the Old Testament abound with information which it would be hard to find elsewhere in a form so readily accessible. Any one who reads French will find them a storehouse of suggestions which only require a little discretion in their use to be highly serviceable. The character of the Commentary on the New Testament is precisely what M. Reuss's work on "The Christian Theology of the Apostolic Age" would lead us to expect: it is the quarry from which that work was dug, with its materials restored to their original place.

There can be no question as to the immense industry and reading shewn in *THE ENGLISHMAN'S CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY BIBLE CYCLOPÆDIA*, by the *Rev. A. R. Fausset, M.A.*; but it may well be doubted whether that erudition and industry have not been ill-bestowed. "Unity of tone and aim" may, indeed, be secured by "unity of authorship," as Mr. Fausset pleads; but the gain is doubt-

ful, the loss only too certain. For it is quite impossible for any one man to be master of all the subjects treated in a Biblical Cyclopædia, or even so to get them up as not to fall into many errors. On many subjects he must borrow nearly all he seems to have from the works of scholars who gave themselves to original thought and research ; and he should be very sure of the tone and bias of his own mind before he concludes that the work of other and abler men than himself will be improved by passing through it. If Mr. Fausset had been a little more emphatic in his acknowledgment of his debts to other men, he would have done himself no harm. But even the frankest employment and the frankest acknowledgment of the employment of the labours of others would not have enabled him to produce a Cyclopædia adapted to general use. For Mr. Fausset's dogmatic prepossessions are very strong and very narrow. He still believes in the *verbal* inspiration of Holy Writ ; his doctrine of election is Calvinistic rather than Biblical ; he has not grasped the fact that no man, no family, no race, no Church even, was ever yet elected for its own sake, but for the benefit of the world at large ; and maintains, in the face of the New Testament teaching, that Christ died *sufficiently* for all, *efficiently* only for the elect ! It is not likely, therefore, that beyond the bounds of a small and declining school of thought his Cyclopædia will find much acceptance, able as it is in its way, and full of labour. Kitto and Smith are in no danger as yet.

HAMARTIA : *An Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (Elliot Stock). We have read this thoughtful and fine-toned little essay with much interest and sympathy, and can heartily commend it to all students whose eschatological views have not yet run and hardened into the "orthodox" forms. Those who have made up their minds may be irritated by it, not benefited. But to as many as have been led to question "the traditions of the fathers" concerning the world to come, it will be very welcome,—reminding them now of Thomas Erskine and now of Andrew Jukes, especially of the latter.

To the same class of readers we may recommend a small book entitled, FUTURE PUNISHMENT NOT ETERNAL, by the *Rev. A. R. Symonds*. It contains a very sober and sensible statement of the argument for the ultimate reconciliation and subjection of all souls to God. The argument is so soberly and devoutly stated, indeed, that even those who differ most widely from the author's conclusion may yet read it without offence.

THE PROPHET HOSEA.

THERE are several points of interest in the person and work of Hosea. First, he was a prophet of the northern kingdom: we may say the only prophet of the northern kingdom who has left any written prophecy. The great prophets of Israel, Elijah and Elisha, lived before written prophecy began. Unless we accept the theory of Hitzig and some other critics, that the two Chapters numbered xv. and xvi. in our present book of Isaiah form a fragment of the prophecies of Jonah, who was a prophet of the north, we possess nothing of his; for the book that goes by his name is not prophecy but narrative, and makes no pretension to be written by him, and is to all appearance a very great deal later than his day. Amos, though his prophetic career, so far as we know it, was confined to the north, was a native of Judæa, and he looked on the conditions of human life in the north with a stranger's eye, and estimated them from a stranger's point of view. Perhaps the pictures which he draws are all the sharper in their outlines on this account, and the figures bolder and more energetic, and the colours laid on with a more vigorous and determined hand. At least his sketches of the magnates of Israel and of the women of Samaria are from no friendly pencil. The artist is one of the people, and his subject is an effeminate and dissolute aristocracy; and we

may be sure no pains was taken to tone down the picture or throw any shade over its hideousness. But Hosea was a native of that evil northern land himself. He had grown up familiar with all the forms of its life : however evil they might seem to him, they could not strike him as strange. And as even the forms of wickedness which mark a people's history spring from characteristics of the people's mind and position which are not evil, these must have been shared by the prophet ; and if he could not sympathize with the evil wrought by his countrymen, he could see whence it arose, and judge it more leniently and condemn it less severely. It is cause for special thankfulness that Scripture has preserved to us this book, the product of a northern mind, the testimony borne to itself by the northern kingdom. The books of Kings and Chronicles are late, and pass lightly over the affairs of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes : their view is general, and, as was right, condemnatory. And we are apt, in our hasty and superficial manner, to conclude that, because this kingdom is condemned as upon the whole bad, therefore it was wholly bad, and to forget that moral uniformity is nowhere seen ; that there is a struggle everywhere between the good and the evil, and that only after a conflict of many generations is the one or the other victorious. The designs of Providence in the erection of this kingdom form a very profound problem. Favoured in its origin by prophets, Ahijah and Shemaiah ; fostered and purified by the greatest prophetic geniuses of the Hebrew people, Elijah and Elisha ; preached to by Amos, a direct messenger from God, and its sins condemned, but with only a condemnation by inference for itself ; at last assailed by Hosea,

one of its own children, and the chiefest and first of its sins declared to be the sin of its ever having come into existence—these things form a riddle difficult to solve. Had Providence, in permitting its rise, other designs? and the prophets, in promoting the secession, other hopes? And might the kingdom have had a great destiny and played a great part in the history of salvation, if Jeroboam the son of Nebat had understood the principles of God's kingdom? We see the possibilities of things only when these are possibilities no more. When our life is spent, or irrevocably lowered, we see the meaning of living, and exclaim, What this life of ours might have been! By the time Hosea came upon the scene the energies of Israel were exhausted; his youthful powers had been wasted; there was no destiny awaiting him now; he was prematurely old: "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not" (Chap. vii. 9). Not in years, but in vital power, he was old; and, like others in that state, he could not be made to feel it.

Yet we cannot help a certain sympathy for that northern kingdom. It embodied in its origin a protest, strong and strange for that time and that Eastern land, against political despotism, even if we should not go the length of regarding the movement as a protest against religious innovation and centralization, and an appeal to the conservative spirit to return to old forms—a view certainly not that of Hosea. No doubt the break occurred where there had always been a weakness. A crack in the political unity ran across the country, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, between the boundaries of Ephraim and Benjamin. In

the Song of Deborah we observe all the northern tribes acting together, both east and west of the Jordan ; but no allusion is made to any of the tribes south of Ephraim. The secession of the northern confederation was, however, none the less a bold and decisive stroke in behalf of freedom and popular rights. Perhaps, like a political neighbour of our own, its instinct for freedom was much in excess of its capacity for self-government, and the frequent use which it made of the weapon of revolution brought no lasting liberty or tranquillity to itself. It shook off one despot only to come under the yoke of another. The great number of different tribes formed an obstacle to close coherence, although it was favourable to the love of freedom ; and the kingdom was rarely united except when some stern soldier grasped the reins of power. The three greatest rulers of the north were Omri, Jeroboam II., and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, all of them military despots, but men of ability, obeyed at home and feared abroad.

The northern kingdom embraced the happiest regions of the country : the most fertile, as the plains of Sharon and Jezreel ; the most splendidly wooded, as Ephraim, Carmel, and Lebanon ; and the best watered. The streams of Naphtali and Gilead never ran dry, and the cool breezes from Lebanon perpetually invigorated the dwellers in the great plain at its foot. Nature was kinder, and her moods more variously genial, than in the south. Hence the life of the people was perhaps more joyous, and their love for nature deeper ; and, as they were far from the centre of Jehovah-worship, their religious feelings and thoughts were freer. Both what is good and bad in their his-

tory may be partly accounted for in this way. There are allusions in the Song of Solomon which seem to imply a later age than that of Solomon. If this exquisite pastoral be not by him, it owes its origin to the northern kingdom, nature's varying moods in which it perfectly reflects. Again, if the afflicted righteous of Job be not merely the righteous man, but the righteous nation and people trodden down under the foot of professed idolaters, it was in all likelihood the sufferings of Ephraim that drove one of his children thus to express his sorrow and his perplexity over his country's fate and the inexplicable ways of God. Such freedom in criticizing God's ways, such boldness of despair in the face of the problems of Providence, seem foreign to the devouter minds of the south. They might have been found in the desert, but the book is certainly a production of the Hebrew mind, and perhaps the conditions of its production are easiest to be conceived in the northern kingdom. If we owe to the north the Song of Songs, the book of Job, and the Prophet Hosea, to say nothing of the Song of Deborah and much else in the historical books, our obligations are of such a kind as to make us regard with a perplexed wonder the profound capabilities and the perverse destiny of this people. But, on the other hand, the evil in Israel may to some extent be explained in the same way. This profounder love of nature and this less deep awe of God might readily increase each other and grow into excess; and so it seems to have been. The charms of nature altogether overpowered the people, and her sweet influences became divine. The nation fell into the worship of the many powers of physical life under the name of

Baal ; and this enfeebling worship crushed out all the moral energy from their heart, and led to the grossest dissoluteness of manners. In the south the moral temper was sterner. No prophet of Judah draws such pictures of immorality as Amos does, or even Hosea : " Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding " (Chap. iv. 11). Micah and Isaiah both chastize the people of the south for the oppression of the poor by the rich, for their avarice, and judicial corruption, and drunkenness ; but neither of them alludes to licentiousness. But in Israel this vice, with its usual accompaniments of violence and bloodshed, had deeply penetrated all classes, even those whose purity is most closely watched : " I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your betrothed when they commit adultery : for ye yourselves go aside with whores, and ye sacrifice with harlots " (Chap. iv. 14) ; " False swearing, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood " (Chap. iv. 2) : *i.e.*, one bloody deed follows immediately on the heels of another.

It would be to carry the theory of the influence of circumstance in the formation of mind and character too far, to explain the peculiarities of this prophet's disposition and writings from his northern origin. And, with the life of Elijah before us, we could hardly deny that there were minds with strong enough fibre in this kingdom. Yet it is singular that the author of Isaiah xv. xvi. so completely resembles Hosea in the tenderness and sorrow of his tone. Hosea surpasses him only because it is his brethren, and not strangers, whose fate he laments and strives to avert. His voice, when addressing his countrymen, is always choked with

emotion. His speech is little else than a succession of sobs. He behaves before the wickedness and inevitable doom of his countrymen, with the extravagance of a distracted mourner in the presence of his dead. He clings to them, and calls to them, and will not believe that hope is past; and, rising up to a height of ecstasy which is almost frenzy, he apostrophizes death with the threat, in Jehovah's name, "O death, I will be thy plagues!" His grief over his countrymen is pure, without one element of anger. He has none of the scorn which Amos cannot conceal for the luxury and effeminacy of the magnates of Israel. And corresponding to his own character is his conception of God. The Divine Heart is but his own with Divine deepness. Jehovah also is at his wit's end with his people: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? for thy goodness is as a morning cloud" (Chap. vi. 4). He too is distracted between love and grief: "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?" (Chap. xi. 8.) Hosea first of all the prophets rises to the sublime height of calling the affection with which Jehovah regards his people, *love*. No prophet had named such a word before. In Joel, God is "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Chap. ii. 13). In Amos, He is good and beneficent, the great outstanding example of his goodness being his redemption of his people from Egypt, and his planting them in Canaan: "Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite" (Chap. ii. 9, 10); and his relation to Israel is expressed by the profound term *know*: "You only have I *known* of all the families of the earth" (Chap. iii. 2). But

no prophet before Hosea ventures to name the *love* of God: "When Israel was a child then I *loved* him, and called my son out of Egypt" (Chap. xi. 1); "I will heal their backslidings, I will *love* them freely" (Chap. xiv. 4). This idea is the most remarkable thing in Hosea's prophecy, and perhaps is almost the only theological idea in it—the various forms in which it is presented and figures in which it is set, and the various deductions from it, virtually making up the prophecy.

The main contents of Hosea's prophecy are these:

1. His lamentations over the immorality and violence everywhere prevailing among the people. This immorality he calls whoredom and adultery: "They are all adulterers; they are as an oven heated by the baker." (Chap. vii. 4. Compare the passages already cited.) Coupled with this is the riot and excess in wine indulged in by the highest in the land on great state occasions—"On the day of our king the princes made themselves sick with a fever of wine" (Chap. vii. 5)—and the treacherous revolutionary spirit that burned in the hearts of the nobles, breaking out in deeds of bloodshed, and manifesting itself, as it descended through all classes, in robbery and violence, in which even the priests engaged: "They have made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait; . . . they are all hot as an oven, and devour their judges; all their kings are fallen (Chap. vii. 6, ff.); "Gilead is a city tracked with blood, and as robbers lie in wait, so is the company of priests; they murder in the way towards Shechem." (Chap. vi. 8, ff. Comp. Chap. vii. 1.) In addition to this there was the secular spirit and devotion to material well-being that had

taken possession of every mind : "Canaan! in his hand are balances of deceit: he loveth to oppress. Ephraim saith, Surely I am become rich: I have found me wealth" (Chap. xii. 7).

The picture which this prophet exhibits of the internal condition of the northern kingdom in his day is a terrible one. He lived during, perhaps, the most unquiet and turbulent times which the country had ever passed through. His prophecies extend over a considerable period of its history. Some of them, perhaps, belong to the time anterior to the death of Jeroboam II., but others fall in the time of the long interregnum that followed his death. After this interregnum of eleven years, Zechariah, son of Jeroboam, succeeded in mounting the throne, on which he sat only a few months, and was then assassinated by Shallum. It is in the midst of this unquiet time that Hosea addresses his countrymen. The firm rule of Jeroboam had just ended. The forces of revolution were newly broken out, and were acting in all their strength. Under the last king's long and successful reign the country had advanced greatly in material prosperity. There were ample resources in the land to nourish the various factions, and they struggled with one another with a fury that was fresh and unexhausted. The Prophet can compare this destructive fury to nothing but the raging heat of an oven, although the figure contains the darker trait of a long-sighted scheming policy that suppressed and nursed the fire till the time came to let it blaze out. In Amos's day, who prophesied under Jeroboam, society was dissolute; but in Hosea's day it was dissolved. The former prophet assails the great, the upper classes, for their immorality and drunkenness,

calling the women "kine of Bashan," full fed, luxurious, and gross, saying to their lords, "*Bring, and let us drink*;" and for their pitiless treatment of the poor, whom they sold for a pair of shoes, whose pledged garments they retained overnight, and to whom they sold the refuse of the grain. But oppression of the poor and injustice are usual occurrences in the East, and only prove that a government is bad, not that it is unstable. In Hosea's days, however, every class seemed flung against another, and the furious passions, whether revolutionary or immoral, of the people consumed all about them. In these circumstances it hardly needed a prophet to see that the end of the State was at hand. And, what was worst of all, no hold could be got of the people, from their superficial fickleness and moral shallowness. Sometimes they seemed resolved to abide by their idolatry, with a resolute insensibility to better things: "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." Sometimes, again, the feeling of their true relations to Jehovah seemed as if it would come back and soften their hearts: "My God, we know thee, we Israel" (Chap. viii. 2); "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: . . . he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Chap. vi. 1). But their superficiality and changeableness threw even the Divine Mind into despair: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? . . . for your goodness is as a morning cloud" (Chap. vi. 4).

2. The religious declension and false worship of the people, in its two forms of Baal or nature-worship and Jehovah-worship under the figure of the calf or young bull, forms the largest element in Hosea's book. The Prophet calls this also whoredom and adultery: "Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my

wife, neither am I her husband: and let her put away her whoredoms from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts." (Chap. ii. 2. Comp. Verses 5, 7, 12, 13; iv. 13, ff.; v. 3, &c.) The name of whoredom, given to this false worship, might be the natural corollary of the conception, first expressed by this prophet, and but a figure for his main idea of the love-relation of Jehovah to his people, that the Lord is the Husband of the Church. But it is probable that the name arose in another way. The Baal-worship was accompanied by shameful prostitution, in which indeed it partly consisted; and it is likely that these practices first brought down upon the Baal-religion this general name, although the idea fitted perfectly into the great conception of Jehovah's relation of Husband to Israel, and received much elaboration and extension from successive prophets in this connection.

It is remarkable that Hosea joins the calf-worship with the worship of Baal in the sweep of a single condemnation. The calf-worship is also idolatry: "He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria: . . . for from Israel is it also: the workman made it, and it is no God." (Chap. viii. 5. Comp. x. 5, ff.; xiii. 2, ff.) This looks like an advance in logical clearness and stringency over the Prophet's predecessors. To Amos the calf-worship was reprehensible, but he had not called it idolatry. And when we read the history of Elijah, we discover that, while he fought against the Baal-worship as a matter of life and death to Israel, he has no word of condemnation for the worship of the calf. The conclusion has been drawn that in these facts we may trace the advance, step by step, of the popular religion of Israel, from nature-worship first to a worship of

Jehovah which was still sensuous; and then, by a further clarification of the Divine idea, to a worship of Him which was purely spiritual, and that the leaders in this advance were the prophets. That this advance was involved in the conflict which the prophets waged, no one will deny. But what will be denied is, that the spiritual worship of Jehovah is a novelty, and the result of the conflict. The prophets fought, according to their own representation at least, not in order to gain this, but lest it should be lost. They are not innovators; they call men back to the old paths. The storm-cloud of judgment which, in the vision of Amos, sweeps round the whole horizon, discharges its fury on Judah "because they have despised the law of the Lord, and have not kept his commandments, and their *lies* caused them to err" (Amos ii. 4); and Hosea threatens the priests in these terms: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast *forgotten* the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Chap. iv. 6). The spiritual worship of Jehovah, without material form, had prevailed from the time of Moses, for it is not supposed that any image existed in the Tabernacle. But that this worship was sometimes in danger of being overwhelmed by the tide of idolatry is certain, and is a thing quite natural. For the Israelites were surrounded on all sides by these idolatrous tendencies, and their kings sought alliances with the nations where they prevailed. And the religious condition even within Palestine must have been a very mixed one. For a "mixed multitude" came up with Israel out of Egypt. Tribes here and there

attached themselves to the host in the wilderness. The native populations of Canaan, among whom the grossest forms of nature-worship prevailed, were not exterminated, but absorbed into the nation, becoming with it practically, with the rarest exceptions, one people. Such a mass could not be penetrated in a day with pure conceptions of deity. On the contrary, the pure light of Jehovah could only illuminate the fringes of this illimitable darkness, which threatened ever to swallow it up. Too much weight is given to the presumed silence of Elijah regarding the calf-worship. The history of Elijah which we possess is later than his day; and it was no doubt the design of the author of it to confine his work to tracing the glorious campaign of his hero against the infamous priests of Baal—a campaign the full fruits of which were reaped only in the sweeping revolution of Jehu, that shortly after involved the house of Omri in the ruin of the superstition which it had upheld. And then, as to the difference between Hosea and Amos, we must, in judging their statements, observe their type of mind, and the natural light in which they view things. Amos is the prophet of morality, of natural right, of the ethical order in human life—upheld, no doubt, by Jehovah, and referrible to Him at last.¹ Hosea is a prophet of religion. Jehovah is the starting-point from which he begins, the centre of his whole view. The light that covers all things is a light that falls on them from Jehovah. In that light he sees sharply the bearings of all practices in the nation's life, and the incongruity of the calf-worship with the true idea of Jehovah at once strikes his eye. The prophets of the second half

¹ Duhm, "Theology of the Prophets."

of the ninth and of the eighth century are of immense value in enabling us to conceive the condition of men's minds in their day. But they do more than this: they enable us to overshoot their day, and behold what is indefinitely anterior to it. The most significant contribution which they make is the attitude which they take up. They are not leaders of the people in a path that shall conduct them to new truths—truths never known before. On the contrary, their movement is retrograde. They desire to preserve for the people what they are losing. They call them back to old attainments in knowledge and sanctity; they tell them that they have "forgotten" and "corrupted themselves." (Comp. Chap. viii. 1; xiii. 4, where, for "shalt know," read "knowest.")

This subject cannot be pursued further here. But the picture of religious confusion which the Prophet draws is even more extraordinary than his pictures of social and political anarchy. He justly complains that there is "no truth nor mercy nor *knowledge of God* in the land" (Chap. iv. 1), and that the "people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Chap. iv. 6). All true conceptions of deity had gone from their minds. A vague sense of some power "not themselves" in nature seemed the utmost they could reach. There was no want of sacrifice and incense and feasts; and these were offered, too, to the name of Jehovah, but with no perception of his character: "I desire . . . the knowledge of God more than burnt-offering" (Chap. vi. 6). The Baal-worship and Jehovah-worship had run into one. The existing syncretism was the confluence of two streams, a worship of Jehovah, although among the mass of the people with somewhat

clouded conceptions of his spirituality and ethical nature—conceptions which the calf-worship tended to darken still further—and a nature-worship under the name of Baal, which, running always as a feeble stream among the people, as their history in the wilderness shews (Chap. ix. 10; xi. 1, ff.), had been reinforced and increased to a flood by the inbreak of Phœnician idolatry. Even when the revolution of Jehu put an end to this worship as a public institution, its spirit remained, and served itself of the various forms of Jehovah-worship, and lived on. The confusion was deepened by the fact that in Israel the name Baal, which means “lord,” had naturally been in use as a designation of Jehovah—a fact which can hardly be doubted when we remember the many proper names compounded with Baal, such as Ishbaal. Afterwards, when the name fell into disrepute, and from its dangerous character was proscribed, these names were transformed, and the popular abhorrence substituted *bosheth* (“shame”) for the primary element of the compound. Hosea (Chap. ii. 16, ff.) looks forward to the happy time when this name shall no more be used: “In that day thou shalt call me *Ishi* (my husband); thou shalt no more call me *Baali* (my Baal, lord).” But a change of name could do little to clarify the people’s conceptions of God. Sterner measures were demanded. As sin has so infected our natural bodies that they must die and be dissolved, and atom be separated from atom till sin has nought to which to attach itself, and thus really we shall “die unto sin;” so every institution which the Baal-spirit had infected in Israel, from the rites of religion down to the husbandry of the ground, shall perish and cease, and the remnant of Baal shall be cut off, and

Jehovah alone shall be exalted. "The corn, and the wine, and the oil, of which the people said, These are my hire that the Baalim have given me, the Lord will take back in the time thereof" (Chap. ii. *passim*)—and the institutes of religion, which Baal had invaded and filled with his unclean spirit, shall be abolished till a purer worship arise; and the kingdom shall be broken up, and the people go into captivity: "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." (Chap. iii. 4. Comp. ii. 13, ff.; viii. 11, ff.; ix. 1, ff., &c.)

3. Another considerable element in Hosea's prophecy is his opposition to the foolish politics of his country, the alternate coquetting with Assyria and Egypt. He gives the same name of whoredom and "hiring loves" to this policy: "They are gone up to Assyria, like a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim hireth loves" (Chap. viii. 9); "Then Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, and Ephraim went to Assyria, and sent to king Jareb; but he is not able to heal you" (Chap. v. 13). The name of whoredom may have been given to the foreign policy of the nation, either because the foreign nations whose aid was sought were idolatrous, and their overwhelming influence tended to a reciprocity of religion and the flooding of the land of Israel with their thought and the forms of their civilization, as Isaiah says of his countrymen, "*They are filled from the East,*" and contrasts the happy time coming when the people shall return to what is native, when the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful, . . . and the fruit of the land

a pride and a glory (Isa. ii. 6; iv. 2); or the name may have sprung immediately from the Prophet's conception of Jehovah as the Husband of Israel. This leaning on foreign nations and trust in them indicated alienation from Jehovah and mistrust in Him; the Husband felt He did not possess the whole-hearted affection which He claimed. This changeable policy, not unnatural to a small State situated between two great empires, in the collision of which it was ever liable to be crushed, was dangerous even on principles of ordinary statecraft. It was like the unstable fluttering from place to place of a foolish bird: "Ephraim is like a silly dove, without understanding: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria" (Chap. vii. 11). In the nature of things such a policy must prove disastrous. Both empires resented, and felt free to revenge what they could call disloyalty. But in the Prophet's view the disloyalty was of a deeper kind: it was against Jehovah: and the chastisement of it came direct from Him: "When they go, I will spread my net upon them" (Chap. vii. 12). Here and everywhere in the Prophets the Nemesis of the evil deed is wrapped up within it; men fall by their own counsels (Chap. xi. 6); the reed on which they lean goes up into their hand: "Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria" (Chap. ix. 3).¹

¹ The expression "unclean" used here indicates that in the view of the Prophet and those of his time the land of Israel was sacred, and all other lands profane; that only in that land could Jehovah be worshipped by sacrifice and aright, and that food not sanctified by the preliminary rite of sacrifice to Jehovah was unclean (Chap. ix. 4, ff.). This is one of a class of references in the early Prophets of extreme value in the present condition of Old Testament criticism, when investigators into the antiquity and order of succession of the Hebrew records have turned away from the literary characteristics of the books, as offering no basis for anything except the most general conclusions, to pursue inquiries into the archaeological contents of the books, the ideas prevailing in them, the relations of law to law and codes of law to one another, and the like, and thus trace the progress of

4. The last thing which Hosea blames in Israel is its rebellion and defection from the house of David, which, truly considered, was defection from Jehovah also. This is its primary offence, and the root of all other offences (Chap. viii. 4; xiii. 11, 16). Hence in their regeneration they shall undo their past rebellion, and seek Jehovah their God and David their king (Chap. iii. 5).

5. The great truth which Hosea has to teach is the love of Jehovah to Israel. It was in love that He redeemed them from Egypt (Chap. xi. 1); his relations to them all through their history have been those of love (Chap. xi. 4); even his chastisements have been inflicted in love (Chap. ii. 14 and Chap. iii. *passim*); and, finally, their restoration and everlasting peace shall come about through Jehovah's love (Chap. v. 4, ff.). This relation of love Hosea expresses by calling Jehovah the Father and especially the Husband of Israel. The idea of the latter relation runs through the whole prophecy, and is the more fertile idea of the two, or at least truer to the primary conception of the Old Testament religion, which is that of a covenant (Chap. vi. 7), and not that of generation by Jehovah; although the latter idea, really the more profound, is touched upon by Hosea, and more fully developed by later prophets. Throughout the Prophets, who are statesmen in the kingdom of God, the person or subject with whom Jehovah enters into relations is always the community of Israel. Individual Israel-

thought and institution, and construct a history of Israel from within. Hosea is particularly rich in allusions to matters now in controversy. Compare, on the appliances of worship, Chapter iii. 4; on the written law, viii. 12; the multiplicity of altars, xii. 11; viii. 11; x. 1; iv. 13; the novelty of the Baal worship, xiii. 1, 4; xi. 2; ix. 8, 1; vii. 13; historical allusions, i. 4; iii. 5; vi. 7, if we read "like Adam;" x. 9, 14; xi. 8; xii. 3, ff., 12, ff.

ites only share the blessings of this fellowship, in a secondary way, as members of the community. No doubt, side by side with this view, there runs another. The claims of the individual spirit ever thrust themselves forward and become more pressing; and the fruit of this strife of the individual to attain and express his true relations to Jehovah we observe in the Psalms and in such books as Job. To this strife we owe the full development of such doctrines as that of immortality. But the Prophets deal with the kingdom of God and its destinies; all their activities are directed toward the well-being and perfection of the community. And the idea of the marriage relation between Jehovah and the community, when once struck, opened up the way both to the extension and the deepening of former conceptions of the covenant relation. The somewhat hard and merely civil notions of fidelity to a paction, and offence at the breach of it, have thrown over them the glow of human relations. Affection, and faithfulness, and the keen emotions of wounded love, and hasty anger (Isa. liv. 8), and putting away, and an overwhelming regret that longs for reunion, and much else (Chap. ii. 19, ff.), are all sides of one great truth, proofs of profound efforts to approach what can never be reached, the idea of the love of God "that passeth knowledge." How strong a hold this idea had taken of the prophet Hosea we may see from the extraordinary use which he makes of the circumstances of his own married life in the first three Chapters of his book.

In this connection an interesting question arises, viz., What is the relation to one another of the ideas which have been referred to above in particulars

1 to 5? Which of them is primary, and in what order did they arise? In seeking an answer to such a question we must distinguish between the way in which these ideas arose historically in the Prophet's mind as the forms of the national life and the tendencies of his country presented themselves to him, and the way in which we perceive them to lie in his mind when, towards the end of his career perhaps, he sat down to write his book. By this time his scheme of ideas had crystallized, and the order of thought in his own mind, although he does not follow this order strictly in his book, is the order which reading his book at once suggests to our minds. The idea of the Divine Love and the marriage relation is first, and all other ideas are but deductions from it. That this idea had already become primary when he wrote, is evident from his placing the history or allegory of his own married life at the head of his work. What follows, not only in Chapter ii., but to the end, is but exposition of the one thought. But the thought is grasped with extraordinary clearness, and followed out with great consistency.

First, this love of Jehovah elevates the object of it into a personality, and gives it a unity of feeling, giving it also the sense of benefit, and of responsibility. But from this unity follows the sin of the schism of the nation under Jeroboam. This divided the object on which God's love was fixed; it both made that love which cannot be divided impossible, and particularly it made impossible the reciprocal duties. Whether we might not find here an argument even for a more perfect superficial unity than exists among Christian Churches may be left a suggestion.

Again, it seems carrying out the idea of the married relation with even a greater stringency and inwardness when the Prophet condemns the national policy. It was not merely that seeking the help of Assyria and Egypt shewed distrust of Jehovah: this might be momentary, and due to the perilous exigencies of the situation. The Prophet, with a certain subtlety, seizes the condition of mind of the community and the direction of the heart, which indicated profound alienation of feeling and dissatisfaction with the whole range of affections and duties that her relation to Jehovah imposed. What he detected in her policy was the desire to rank as one of the nations (Chap. vii. 8), to become a military power and ride upon horses (Chap. xiv. 3), and affect the pomp of a secular state by building "palaces" and fenced cities (Chap. viii. 14). It was this secular feeling and entire misconception of her true meaning that prompted the community to demand a king at first, and led men like Samuel, who saw clearly the meaning of it, to resist the demand. Even in this early age Hosea and other prophets understood clearly what Christ stated in words: "My kingdom is not of this world."

And, once more, if the breaking up of the kingdom, and mixing among the nations (Chap. vii. 8), was held by the Prophet to be a disruption of the one consciousness of the object beloved, and a confusion fatal to the continuance of Jehovah's affection and the right performance of duties to Him, the setting up of Baal-worship or even calf-worship was much more an offence against his love. This not only shewed alienation of feeling; it was downright infidelity. And the Prophet exposes, with a grave severity unmingled with any feel-

ing of its absurdity, the feminine vanity and love of attire that characterized the community even when pursuing her grosser pleasures—when “she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers” (Chap. ii. 13).

The order of the Prophet's book shews that, when he wrote it, the primary idea in his mind was the love-relation of Jehovah to Israel, and that his other thoughts follow from it as corollaries. It is possible, however, that he did not start on his prophetic career with any such scheme in his mind, but was led to it in attacking one by one and independently the practical mischiefs he encountered among the people. There are some indications, however, which would lead us to infer that the idea of the marriage-relation of Jehovah to Israel was one with which the Prophet began his career of public preaching; and, if this be so, we are perhaps put upon the track of the way in which this great primary idea came to take possession of him. The prophecy commences: “In the beginning, when the Lord spake by Hosea, the Lord said unto Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms” (Chap. i. 2). There seems this much at least of history here, that the idea of Israel's infidelity, and consequently the idea of her married-relation to Jehovah, was a primary one in the Prophet's mind from the moment of his public action, however much his long activity may have given it clearness. Consequently we are thrown into a period anterior to this to find the circumstances that gave the idea such force to him. These circumstances are no doubt those which he narrates in his own personal history. To suppose that Jehovah would have commanded his prophet to ally himself to a woman already

known as of impure life is absurd and monstrous. On the other hand, the supposition that the story told in Chapters i. to iii. of the Prophet's married life is pure allegory, with no element of history in it, is superficial, and does no justice to the severe realism of the Prophet's character and words. Some such miserable history as he narrates had no doubt been his own. His wife had gone astray from him, sharing the deep corruption of the time. What had happened to him had happened to others. Nay, it was not a corruption of individuals only; it was universal. Israel was corrupt; and the thought flashed on him that his history was but a type of the history of Jehovah and his people. And, looking into it still more deeply, the additional conviction forced itself on his mind that it was not an accident or a misfortune that had brought him through such painful experiences. It was God's providential way of making a prophet of him, and giving him his prophetic word. Henceforth he comes forward as a prophet, and speaks with the energy and pathos of one who has experienced in life what he speaks, whose experiences have been his school for his work, and who feels that the Lord designed them to be so, and had through them lifted him up into a fellowship with Himself. Of course, when he came to write his prophecies, long after, he extended the bare outline of facts, and added to it much ideal ornamentation, in order the better to body out the great divine truth which both his life and revelation had so profoundly impressed upon him.

6. This paper is already too long; and nothing further than a brief allusion can be made to the brilliant anticipations of the Prophet in regard to

the future of his people, founded on the unchangeable love of Jehovah ; his certainty of their restoration to God's favour (Chap. i. 10; xiv. 3, ff.); of the reunion of the disrupted kingdom, in the Messiah's days, under "one head" (Chap. i. 11) ; of the reconstruction of the dismembered tribes, set forth as a resurrection (Chap. vi. 2), an idea elaborated into such splendid proportions by Ezekiel (Chap. xxxvii.), and applied apparently in a literal way to deceased individuals of the house of Israel in Isaiah xxvi. ; of the destruction of Death and Hell (Chap. xiii. 14) ; and the final settlement of the people of God in holy beauty and unchanging power, when they "shall grow as the lily, and cast forth their roots like Lebanon" (Chap. xiv. 5).

A. B. DAVIDSON.

THE PAULINE ARGUMENT FOR A FUTURE STATE.

COLOSSIANS i. 27.

THERE is a close connection between exposition and apologetics. Exposition is the setting forth of a man's ideas, apologetics the attempt to verify those ideas ; and it frequently happens that the surest way of verifying them is just to set them forth. Pope says :—

Vice is a creature of such hideous mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen.

In saying so he is simply stating, in other words, that the best argument against sin would be an exposition of it. What the English poet says about sin might conversely be maintained of holiness, and of that eternal life which is supposed to be the crown of holiness : to be loved and to be believed in, it has

simply to be exhibited. No evidence for immortality could equal the certitude that would be experienced in one breath of the immortal atmosphere. Such is, at all events, the view with which Christianity approaches the problem of a future state. It no more argues for immortality than it argues for God; it studies to *represent* immortality and God. Our very attribution of futurity to the conception of man's immortal destiny embodied in the first Christian literature is an anachronism. St. Paul would never have spoken of a *future* life; his hope was in a *higher* life. His notion of a world to come was that of a world to be manifested, and whose manifestation was possible in time.

Our design in these pages is to attempt an exposition of the Pauline argument, taking the Pauline argument as the representative of the earliest Christian thought upon this subject. We shall make no effort to verify his positions; we shall content ourselves with trying to set them forth; yet, should we succeed in setting them forth clearly, it is not impossible that the very perception of them may to some minds carry an apologetic value, and convey that special form of evidence which was the only form of evidence recognized by the first age of Christendom.

The Pauline argument for a Future State is contained in seven words: "Christ in you the hope of glory." The first impression suggested by these words is one of surprise. We should have expected that, in a matter of human aspiration, St. Paul would have made his appeal to the light of nature. He was speaking to the inhabitants of a Gentile city; he was speaking of a hope which had always been peculiar to the Gentile nations. That expectation which, in Judaism,

had taken the form of a search for national immortality, had, amongst the nations of the Gentiles, assumed the guise of an individual craving for a life beyond the present. The Jew had found his satisfaction in being a member of a commonwealth whose name would endure as long as the sun, and of whose dominion there would be no end ; the Pagan world, in its greatest philosophic moments, longed for a higher commonwealth than the world had ever seen, a commonwealth in which the individual soul would be a sharer in the universal life. These longings, these hopes of glory, the philosophic mind of Paganism had striven to base on natural reason, and here was a man qualified to be the apostle of natural reason. There never was a leader more adapted to be the missionary of the Gentiles than St. Paul, for there never was a leader in whom the cosmopolitan spirit was more distinctly developed. That light which on the road to Damascus struck him to the earth, struck him down to the level of humanity : when he rose he had the spirit of the earth within him. He had found the meeting-place between the light from heaven and the soil of the human heart, and he was prepared to adapt the new religion to all the natural and earnest expectations of the creature. Yet, when he comes to deal with the most natural and the most earnest expectation of all, he seems to desert altogether the standpoint of earthly reason. When he is called to speak to human nature in that point where human nature has ever supposed itself most akin to the Divine, he refuses to feed its aspirations with the materials it has itself gathered, and points for their fulfilment to a region beyond its natural boundaries : " Christ in you the hope of glory."

But let us look deeper. If we have not altogether mistaken the nature of the Pauline argument, this man was never more the Apostle of the Gentiles than when he made Christ the evidence of immortality, never indicated greater respect for the dictates of natural reason than when he placed in Christianity the solution of the great problem which had stirred the Gentile mind. For a little reflection will make it evident that when St. Paul calls Christ "the hope of glory," he does so because he regards Him as the missing link in the argument of nature, the link which, once supplied, completed the natural chain. In the thought of the Apostle grace is not the antithesis, but the consummation, of nature: Christian evidence, not the reversal, but the corroboration, of human instincts. We must therefore expect to find, if we have truly appreciated the Pauline spirit, that, in the hands of the great Apostle, the Christ-argument for immortality will widen into vast proportions, until it shall embrace all the world-arguments, will supply the deficiencies of human thought while yet interpreting with intenser vividness the original thought of humanity. It is in this light, at all events, that we intend to view the Apostle's argument. We wish, if possible, to discover what relation his reasoning bears to all previous and to all subsequent reasonings on this subject. We wish to find whether the source of evidence suggested by him is one that disparages other sources of evidence, or whether these other sources of evidence only become clear in the light of his suggestion; and if the result of our inquiry shall lead us to the latter conclusion, we may be furnished with another presumption in favour of that all-reconciling claim which St. Paul

makes for the Founder of Christianity: "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

The natural arguments for a future life may, so far as we know, be reduced to four. They are all as old as human reason, yet, at different epochs of the world's history, one or other of them has borne the pre-eminence. Perhaps we shall best mark at once their prominent epochs and their distinctive characters by describing them under four names—the Platonic, the Kantian, the Scientific, and the Poetic. At each of these we shall glance in turn.

1. The Platonic hope of immortality may, in brief and general terms, be described as the argument from unsatisfied desire. The opinion of Plato, when divested of its technical characteristics, may be paraphrased in a form which human nature everywhere will recognize as a true expression of itself. Why is it, he virtually asks, that there is always in the mind of man a typical idea, that is to say, an idea which goes beyond the thought suggested by every object? You speak of a straight line, yet no man has ever seen a perfectly straight line; the straightness is a perfection which your mind imputes to the object. You gaze upon a beautiful landscape; but, even in the act of gazing, your imagination overleaps it, and conjures up a light more lovely and a symmetry more exquisite. You listen to a strain of music; but there is always more in your mind than in the music; some hidden thought in your soul imputes to it a power greater than dwells in itself. Above all, you come into contact with human beings whose virtues you admire and whose acts you seek to emulate; yet you have never said to yourself, This is the perfect man; This is the absolute good-

ness. Your conception of justice always transcends your perception of just men; your ideal of purity always oversteps the boundaries reached by the actually pure; your type of humanity always goes beyond the vision of the human beings who surround you. Why is this? asks the Greek philosopher. Is it not the reminiscence and the prophecy of a life from which we came and a life to which we go? If we had been made for finite forms, we should have been content with the finite forms. Surely the fact that we are not content with them is an indication at once that we have known something better, and that there is something better which still awaits us. Our desires are the index of our capacities. If our desires transcend our capacities, is it not the prophecy that our nature must be enlarged beyond its present limits?

Now every word of this argument would have been admitted by St. Paul. He, like the Greek philosopher, felt the inability of finite forms to realize the ideal of humanity, and declared in express terms that earthly things had no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth: the sense of a glorious type dwarfed the perception of any qualities which could exist in individual things. But Paul went a step further than Plato. The question he would have put would have been this: May not the type be realized in time? Conceding, he would say, that man's nature is such as you indicate, what would be wanted to make your proof of immortality more than a reminiscence or a prophecy? what would be required to make it a present vision? If out of all the objects which meet the mind of man there were to be found *one* whose own glory was so full that it left no sense of a glory that excelleth, whose

own attributes so completely reached the summit of our ideal, that there was no margin left for imagination to climb, what would be the only legitimate inference from such an experience? Would it not clearly be this, that eternity had been revealed in time; that the higher life had been manifested through the lower; and that what men called the future state was no longer necessarily future, but a possibility here and now? Such, said the Apostle of the Gentiles, is the gospel which I declare unto you. We Christians profess to have reached, in one object, that sense of absoluteness which leaves no room for belief in a glory that surpasses it; we profess to have found One who is Himself that all-excelling glory whose absence to you has caused all other things to have no glory. We claim to be already in possession of the light which to you is inaccessible; we profess to have already attained the object which to you is but a grand ideal. We have therefore, even now, come into the vision and fruition of that eternal life which as yet you have only reached as a far-off conclusion of the reason; we *are* risen with Christ; we have already our conversation in heaven: we enjoy our citizenship in that great republic which you have but conceived as a dreamy hope, a mystic possibility, a cloudy ideal of future glory.

2. The second argument for a higher life of the soul is that which finds its most distinguished representative in the German philosopher Kant: it may be called the argument from human responsibility, and may be briefly expressed thus. There is something within my nature which commands me to do right. It gives no reason for its command; it simply says, Thou shalt. It speaks with all the authority of Mount Sinai; it comes

to the soul with a force which is obligatory. "You ought, therefore you can;" "It is your duty, therefore it is within your power:" so speaks the "Categorical Imperative," what we should call the Voice of Conscience. Yet, when we try to execute its commands, we find that one part of our nature contradicts the other. Conscience tells us that we ought; it declares that we are responsible, and therefore able to act; actual experience convinces us that we are not so able. The law thunders from Sinai, and the human heart echoes its thunders; it declares its mandates to be good, and proclaims its own duty to obey. Yet the heart has never succeeded in executing its inward resolve; it sees and approves the right, it follows the wrong. It has done those things which it ought not to do, knowing that it ought not to do them: it has left undone those things which it ought to do, knowing that it ought to do them. The sense of responsibility tells it it has power; the experience of life proclaims it to be impotent. Whence this antagonism in the nature of man? Why is it that the will which in our sense of responsibility is felt to be free, is, in the world of nature, perceived to be a slave? Is it not because nature is not its home, because it has yet to find its true province; because the world of sense is too small for the exercise of its legitimate sway? It has not found freedom, yet it was made to be free; it has not received obedience, yet it was meant to be obeyed. That for which it was made must await it in the future; that which time has denied to it must be reserved for it in eternity. The mandates which have never obtained their fulfilment are still awaiting their fulfilment; the law which has never been put in exercise cries out

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for its place in the world of being, and, in its very antagonism to the fabric of existing things, it reveals the existence of the things which are not seen and eternal.

Such is the reasoning of Kant, and the reader will see that in some respects it bears a strong analogy to the argument of Plato. Now St. Paul anticipated this Kantian argument by seventeen centuries. He, too, felt the pressure of two antagonistic forces in him, and he expresses his sense of their conflict in the most pronounced terms: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind: the evil which I would not, that I do; the good which I would, that I do not." No Kantian philosophy could have conveyed in more unequivocal language the impression of a dualism in the nature of man, the conviction of a struggle between the actual life of experience and the inward life of aspiration and desire. But the reasoning of the Christian Apostle goes further than the Kantian philosophy. Paul would have said to that philosophy: "I can shew you a corroboration of your own view. You are satisfied with discovering the immortal principle in struggle with the principle of dead nature: what if I reveal to you the immortal principle conquering the principle of dead nature? How know you that this testimony of the will to its own freedom is anything more than a phantom of the brain? You admit that it has never been realized in fact; what evidence have you that it is other than a figure? If you could point to one instance in the history of humanity in which the will had proved its freedom; if you could shew us out of the myriad of dualisms one single life in which there was

a harmony between aspiration and action, thought of goodness and deed of purity, we should then have the proof of an immortal principle compared to which all the testimonies of the merely inward life would fade into insignificance. This, and nothing less than this, is what we Christians profess to shew. We offer you a practical proof that the human will has a higher origin than the level of dead nature ; for we reveal to you the spectacle of an actual historical Life, not only struggling with this nature of death, but vanquishing it in the struggle. We profess to believe that amongst the sons of men there has been One who has triumphed over the moral limits of human nature ; who has broken down the barrier between noble aspiration and pure action, and has made the natural world for once the echo of the spiritual. We profess to believe in one sinless Life, one Life in which the mandate, "Let there be light," was followed by the fact that there was light ; one Soul in which the infinite law "Thou shalt" found its complement in the crowning testimony of an existence : "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In Him the antagonism was broken which parted, and still parts, the world of sense from the world of spirits ; in Him the shadows of time became for a moment the pure expression of the thoughts of eternity. We who accept such a solution need not look to a future world to find the missing link of adaptation. We find it here, in the heart of humanity, in the spirit of an individual Man, in the life of a Man of Sorrows whom nature had done her best to imprison in the fetters of finitude. From this source, so naturally unlikely, we derive our strongest evidence of immortality ; for in Him we are confronted by the thought that

heaven and earth have met together, that the law of the spirit of life not only in itself is free, but has made us also free from the law of sin and death.

3. The third line of reasoning by which men have attempted to establish the hope of immortality is that which we have called the Scientific argument, because, although in itself it is popular, and even commonplace, it yet powerfully suggests, if it does not directly imply, a law of the most advanced science—the principle of the conservation of force. The reasoning itself, as it is popularly understood, may be called the argument from identity, and may be briefly put as follows. That which we call human life contains within itself a succession of lives, embraces a series of stages, each rising above its forerunner, and each susceptible of a distinct analysis. There is a world of difference between embryonic life, which precedes birth, and the first sensations of the infant life which follows it. There is a difference scarcely less marked between the stage of infancy and the opening intelligence of childhood. Another world of being divides the child from the youth, and another still separates the youth from the man. The existence of a human soul is thus made up of progressive existences, which are rounded off from each other, and have a history of their own. But what is chiefly to be observed in relation to the present case is not the difference, but the connection, of these lives : there is a chain of identity binding them into one harmonious whole. Take the extreme points of any individual life—the embryo and the fully-developed man : it would almost seem as if nothing could add to the conception of distance which is given in the contrast between them. And yet experience tells us that there

is here no chasm; that there is a continuous connecting-medium enfolding in one personality the lowest and the highest stage of human development; and that the elements of character which in the last result mark out each man from his brother, had their origin and their prophecy in that mysterious formative existence which immediately preceded the period of actual birth. Here then in the very world of sense, where all decays and dies, we have the illustration of an immortal principle not only surviving the death of its natural envelopments, but living *by* the death of those envelopments. The perishable things are shaken that the life which cannot be shaken may remain, and remain more abundantly. We rise on "stepping-stones of our dead selves," but we never step beyond the sense of our own identity, for our personality derives new strength and vigour by each stage of being which it surmounts. Human nature has not unnaturally woven to itself a vision of analogous development in the surmounting of the last stage of all. Not unnaturally, it has ventured to cherish the hope that the deathday may itself be a new birthday, and that the life which has reached the highest phase in time may be only the embryo of a life which is beginning in eternity.

Now, when we turn to the Epistles of St. Paul, we find a view of this subject which, if accepted, would again supply the missing link in human thought, and transform the argument from analogy into the argument from fact. The common reasoning is based upon the perception that we keep our human identity through all the stages of earthly life, and the hope that therefore we shall keep it in the transition from the earthly life to the heavenly. St. Paul says, I will shew you

the identity actually preserved in this transition: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." In the Pauline view, the transition from time to eternity, which is commonly limited to the moment of death, takes place during life in the heart of every Christian. To the Apostle of the Gentiles there is no such passage from death to life at all comparable with that which the soul makes in its regeneration from sin into holiness. The passages from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, are but metaphors in comparison with this. He can find no language strong enough to describe it. He calls it a translation from the power of darkness, and in the very word "translation" he seems to suggest the chariot of fire. He calls it, in more pointed language still, a quickening together with Christ into newness of life; a wakening from amongst the dead; a liberation from the old man, with his worldly affections and lusts, and a putting on of the new man, with his uncorrupted and incorruptible being. Whatever figurative sense these expressions may convey to modern ears, they were no figures to St. Paul. When he spoke of regeneration as a resurrection of the soul, he used words which, to him at least, were a profound reality. It is not always easy to tell whether the Apostle's language regarding Resurrection is intended to refer to a literal or to a spiritual rising. Even the magnificent description of 1 Corinthians xv. has in this respect been variously interpreted. But the reason is not difficult to find: to the mind of St. Paul there was no resurrection so literal as the spiritual one. Spiritual experiences were to him the only realities, and all which the world calls real was but a passing show.

The birth of a soul into natural life was but the shadow and emblem of that higher birth of the spirit of man in which old things were to pass away, and all things to be made new. To him, therefore, there was an evidence of immortality clearer than demonstration, because it was the evidence of direct vision, the testimony of personal experience. If a man could live in his old identity after he had become a new creature, if he could retain his original personality after his spiritual nature had become emancipated from its earthly environments, if he could hold fast to his individual responsibility after the darkness of his past life had been lost in the radiance of a Divine light, was there not already given to the world a certain, an infallible proof that death was not destruction, and that life was perfected in death? Christ was here the hope of glory.

4. We come now to the fourth of these natural arguments which have fostered in man the hope of futurity. Strictly speaking, the word argument cannot be applied to it, for it appeals, not to the science, but to the poetry of human nature. It addresses itself exclusively to the feelings, and is therefore intermittent in its character: it is more felt at some times than at others. It may be said to be the argument founded on the sense of human dignity. Observe, we say the sense, not the fact, of man's dignity. Every creature on the earth has, in point of fact, a dignity in relation to the creatures which lie beneath it; but man is the only creature of the earth who is conscious of this greatness. Man, in his moments of poetic enthusiasm, feels that the life which is in him is worthy of a better fate than the blank of annihilation; and because he has such a feeling he is filled with a lofty hope: his

knowledge that he possesses an impression not shared in by the beast of the field seems to mark out his destiny from the destiny of the lower creation. Nor would his hope be greatly shattered if he were forced to admit to its full extent the conclusions of the most advanced Evolutionism. Let us say that science had established as an incontrovertible fact the derivation of man's spiritual being from the material mechanism of nature; let us say that it had freed beyond all doubt the certainty that our sense of human dignity is but the last result of a combination of physical forces. Would the inevitable consequence of such a theory be the death of human enthusiasm? Would not man's enthusiasm for himself gather strength from the very admission that this sense of human dignity is at least a *last* result, the climax of material nature, so far as material nature has yet advanced in its development? If man's conviction of his own spiritual wealth were proved to a demonstration to be but the latest refinement of a material organism, it would still be the final cause of that organism in the most approved and the most scientific sense of that term; for it would be the type of perfection towards which the organic framework had all along been tending. We should measure our hope of a man's destiny, not by his earliest, but by his latest efforts; we should measure our estimate of the powers of nature, not by their first, but by their last manifestation. If that instinct of immortality which is man's consciousness of himself were nothing more than the full-blown flower of materialism, it would only alter the ground, and not destroy the fact, of man's enthusiasm; it would simply suggest the thought that, at a certain stage of material evolution, nature was so con-

structed as to burst into flower, and reveal the hope of immortality. To the mind, in its moments of elevated feeling, the stimulating thought is the fact that the elevation of its feeling gives it a distinct place in creation. At such moments it matters not whence man came; sufficient is the conviction that, from whatever source he came, he is now at least an existence rounded off from all beside. The poetic instincts of the soul do not inquire what man was; they rest implicitly in the confidence that, whatever he was, he at all events is man now. No doctrine of evolution can touch the certainty of this conviction: it may explain the steps by which human nature has climbed to its present eminence, but it cannot explain away the eminence itself. The origin of humanity becomes a subordinate question; the fact on which the soul's enthusiasm settles is the present existence of its humanity; and the hope on which it bases its immortal aspiration is the susceptibility and the capacity which in the heart of its being the ages have evolved.

Now none felt the force of this sentiment more keenly than St. Paul: to him the human soul was pre-eminently grand. But Paul felt that, in the region which we call the light of nature, the human soul is not adequately represented, and he draws a powerful distinction between the actual and the ideal life of man's spirit; between the product which the hour has realized, and the mighty susceptibilities which are waiting for their realization. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body;" is the language in which the Gentile Apostle distin-

guishes the actual from the potential majesty of the soul. We agree with those Commentators who think that the sowing takes place, not at death, but at birth; that it is not the planting of the life-seed in the ground to wait for a resurrection at the end of time, but the planting of the life-seed in a body of sin and death to be made perfect through the conquest of death, and to obtain the resurrection of those who are perfect through suffering. St. Paul held that, to see the soul in its glory, we must see the soul in its regeneration; and the soul in its perfect regeneration was not to be seen in the actual course of time. Birth into the race of Adam was to St. Paul a partial burial, a sowing of the soul into corruption; its dignity was levelled with the dust, its immortality was allied to the grave. If its dignity were to be seen, if its immortality were to be represented, the race of Adam must be interrupted; there must appear a new river of life which, in part at least, must be fed by those streams which make glad the city of God. Such a life St. Paul declared. The first Adam could not represent the soul, because he was of the earth; but there was a Man from heaven, a Humanity whose form of servitude mirrored the life eternal. It was not simply that the first Adam became sinful, and that the second was uniformly sinless; it was rather that the first Adam, even when sinless, was comparatively soulless—there was more of matter than of mind in him. Christ was the first pure expression of the human soul. He brought life to light, and therefore He brought immortality to light. The evidence which Christ gave the world of a future state lay, not in his words nor in his deeds, but in Himself. We might point to his promise of a Father's house

with many mansions, but what rendered that promise valuable was solely and entirely the character of Him who made it. We might point to the doctrine of his own resurrection as a pledge of man's future destiny, but the writer of the Acts says, not that He was immortal because He rose, but that He rose because He was immortal; He burst the bands of death because it was not possible He should be held by them. We are, therefore, driven back for our vision of immortality to the direct and immediate Presence which bore within itself the secret and the mystery of life eternal. We are called to contemplate the conquest of death, not in the mere historical fact of resurrection, but in that which made resurrection a fact inevitable—the living and life-giving spirit of the Master. We are asked to believe in futurity, or rather in eternity, not on the ground of certain utterances, or on the strength of certain promises, or on the evidence of certain miracles, but on the authority of that inherent grandeur which in the person of the Son of Man the soul claims as its own. In Him man beholds himself at his best, sees the ideal grandeur of his own nature, discovers the nobility, the power, the greatness, of which a human soul is capable; and learns to contemplate an eternal existence no longer as something which is foreign and supernatural, but as that natural and normal law of his own spiritual being which the struggles and aims of time have only interrupted and violated: Christ becomes his hope of glory.

But now St. Paul seems to have proposed to himself a question which since his days has been often repeated. Supposing it should all be so, still what is that to me? Conceding that this outward life of the

Master was a real life, a stainless life, an immortal life ; conceding that He proved his immortality by the most infallible signs and the most unmistakable evidences ; conceding even that the vision of his spiritual nature is the clearest vision which a finite being can have of the things which are not seen and eternal : it still remains to ask, How does this help me ? The Apostle could not have avoided putting to himself such a question. He had all along regarded Christ as the only perfect expression of a human soul which the world had ever seen, and therefore as the highest hope of immortality which the world could ever enjoy ; yet, in the same breath, he had confessed that this Christ was an interruption of the race of Adam. He had never allowed Him to be the son of David in any other sense than "after the flesh : " he had recognized Him as the true Man, but still as the Man from heaven. If so, he must have felt that there was a link yet wanting to his argument to make that argument available even to a believer in the historical Gospel. How could a soul, however human, be any revelation of man's destiny, if it could point to an origin higher than the Adamic ? The sinlessness of such a Being, the resurrection of such a Being, could not prove to me that I am sinless, or that I shall rise. Nay, they could not even prove that sinlessness or resurrection would ever be so much as possibilities to my nature. By the admission of St. Paul, by the distinctive doctrine of the New Testament, the Son of Man possessed these privileges not by reason of, but in spite of, his union with the race of Adam, possessed them as the recipient of a higher life, the descendant of a nobler origin, the inheritor of an older name ; and how then could the race of Adam,

even while it beheld in Him the vision of immortality, be justified in appropriating that vision as the foretaste and the prophecy of its own eternal being?

It was, we believe, the perception of this difficulty which led St. Paul to insert these words, *In you*. He felt that a Christ, however great, however exalted, however Divine, could not, if it ended there, be man's hope of glory; nay, he felt that the more exalted and Divine He was, the less could He be in Himself an evidence of human immortality. Therefore it was that he added a last link to the argument. This Christ was not a mere vision outside of humanity, He was a power within the soul. "Christ *in you* the hope of glory." His was not an interruption of the race of Adam, which merely occurred for a moment, and then left things as they were before; it was an interruption which introduced into the ocean of human life a new stream of being which was thenceforth to mingle its waters with the course of man's earthly destiny. The immortality which Christ revealed was not the *fact* of the resurrection, but the "*power* of the resurrection." The centre of all St. Paul's aspirations regarding Christ was the belief that, alike in his sufferings and in his glory, man might obtain a fellowship, might enter into union, with that Cross and with that Crown which alike and equally revealed the victory of the soul over the body of death. It is here that Christianity has appropriated all that is good and true in the doctrines and the yearnings of Pantheism. It has found the necessity for a God who is not only personal, but impersonal; not only above the world, but in the world; not only the Maker and Monarch, but the Inspirer of the spirit of man. It has not been content to see in Him the King

eternal, immortal, and invisible : it has sought to make man partaker of his eternal, immortal, and spiritual being. It has recognized the need, and it has proclaimed the existence, of something higher than a Divine worship—a Divine communion, a sharing of man's nature in the nature of God. Judaism worshipped the immortal Spirit, but it was unable to appropriate his immortality; there was a middle wall of partition between the Divine and the human which prevented the life of the one from running over into the life of the other. Christianity claims to have broken down the wall, to have made the life of God a possibility to the life of man. It professes to have destroyed that enmity which had so long rendered the finite the antithesis of the Infinite, and to have quickened the heart of time with the pulsations of an eternal Being. The acceptance, or the rejection, of that claim is not here the question, but there is one point at least on which there can exist no doubt. They who have accepted it, if they seem to have yielded to a supernatural influence, have thereby only vindicated the primitive instincts of human nature, and have found for natural reason the key which alone was wanting to unlock the portals of eternal life.

GEORGE MATHESON.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

VI. THE SOLILOQUY OF JOB. (CHAPTERS xxvii.—xxxì.)

WE have followed the polemic of Job with the Friends to its close. We have seen how, as they grew more definite and personal in their charges and more vehement in their invective, he has grown more profoundly conscious of his innocence, and less vehement, though

not less steadfast, in asserting it. And now the conflict is over. Job has silenced—silenced rather than convinced—his antagonists; and, as they sit dumb before him, he breaks into a Soliloquy so elevated and sustained, that almost all the critics regard it as one of the most lovely and exquisite sections of this great Poem. Godet, indeed, speaks of it as “a burst of poetry never surpassed,” as “the most admirable section of the whole book,” and maintains that, “although much the hardest to interpret, it is nevertheless the most accessible to the chastened spirit.”

This Soliloquy, which extends from Chapter xxvii. to Chapter xxxi., is divided into two Monologues; the first embracing Chapters xxvii. and xxviii., and the second, Chapters xxix.—xxxi. Each of these Monologues is introduced with the phrase, “Job took up his *strain*,” the Hebrew word for “strain”—which is sometimes translated by “oracle,” and sometimes by “parable”—covering all discourse of an elevated, picturesque, or poetic tone; so that the Poet himself forewarns us that he is about to attempt a higher than his usual style, to stir and quicken our imagination with words and tropes that we shall not willingly let die.

He has hardly made the promise before he begins to fulfil it. His mind takes a more reflective turn; his pencil is dipped in richer hues: he calls a pause in the action of his drama, and utters a more “lyrical cry.” As we listen to him we feel that the polemic storm has swept past; the air grows clearer; the birds break forth into singing: and if at times an occasional gust or ground-swell reminds us that the day has been one of wind and tempest, we are nevertheless aware that

the storm will not return, that the wind-vexed day is settling into an evening calm rich with the gorgeous yet tender and pathetic hues of sunset. Now and then, indeed, Job reverts, with a quick movement of indignation, to the charges alleged against him by the Friends ; and once at least he cries out against the injustice of Heaven ; but, for the most part, he bears himself with composure and maintains a contemplative mood.

It is easy to see that the Poet has thoroughly enjoyed this part of his work, and put his whole heart into it. He lingers over the themes, over the illustrations even of the themes, he handles ; he elaborates the pictures he paints—as, for example, that of the Miner in Chapter xxviii., or that of the Aborigines in Chapter xxx.—adding line to line and touch to touch, as if he were loth to leave them. Contrasting his present with his previous mood, his meditative with his controversial mood, we are reminded of that exquisite and musical passage in the “Two Gentlemen of Verona” in which Julia describes the course and changes of her passion :—

The current that with gentle murmur glides,
Thou knowest, being stopped, impatiently doth rage :
But, when its fair course is not hinder'd,
He makes sweet music with the enameled stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage ;
And so by many winding nooks he strays,
With willing sport, to the wild ocean.

We have seen him raging and chafing impatiently against the arguments of the Friends, and now we shall have to linger with him in many a winding nook—the inventory of gems, for instance, and the studied use of the various Hebrew names for “gold” in Chapter xxviii. Verses 15–19, or the elaborated image of a

military siege in Chapter xxx. Verses 11-15; and to listen to the "sweet music" he makes as he sings, in Chapters xxix. and xxxi., of the happy days when God "kept" him, and by *his* light he walked through darkness.

But if the charm of the Soliloquy is very apparent, so also are the difficulties of which Godet speaks. Those commentators who are nothing if they are not critical, and even those in whom the critical prevails over the expository function, are very busy in this section of the Poem, detecting inconsequences of thought, rearranging the order of the Verses, or even putting them into other mouths than those of Job; the "higher criticism" being here, as too often elsewhere, mainly a censure of the author it examines or of the editors and commentators who have gone before it. By simply accepting the Poem as it stands, and patiently studying the intention and relation of its parts, we shall find, I hope, that no such heroic remedies, no such hazardous reconstructions, are required; that there is a truer order in the accepted form of this Soliloquy, and a finer meaning, than in any of the rearrangements of it by the critics whose "end" is too often "destruction," even when their aim is construction.

Looking at the Soliloquy as a whole, with a view to ascertain its true place and function in the Poem, there are three points which call for remark: (1) its connection with the polemic which has preceded it; (2) its connection with the harangue of Elihu which follows it; and (3) the conclusion in which, unaided as yet by God or man, Job settles down at the close of the controversy with his Friends.

I. As the waves of strife subside and the voices of

reproach are hushed, Job sinks—*rises*, rather—into a calmer, a more composed and reasonable, mood. Irritated by their “maxims of ashes,” resolute to demolish their “strongholds of clay” (Chap. xiii. 12), he had done some injustice to the arguments of the Friends, and had pushed his own counter-arguments to a point of excess at which they also grew to be untrue. But now that he has refuted and silenced them, now that he is sufficiently at leisure from himself to weigh the discussion fairly, he candidly admits both what had been true in their contention, and what had been untrue, because excessive, in his own. He still holds fast to his integrity (Chap. xxvii. 1-6), and sets it forth, with exquisite pathos, in that lovely picture of his “autumn days” contained in Chapters xxix. and xxxi. So, too, the sense of his misery still abides with him; he gives a new and most moving description of it in Chapter xxx., depicting himself as the offscouring of all things, the scorn of men whom all men scorned. And he still stands to it that he has done nothing to provoke or deserve his misery; that he has been grievously wronged: he exclaims at his wrong (Chap. xxvii. 2; xxx. 20-26), and both demands and implores redress from the Almighty (Chap. xxxi. 35-37). But he admits that in the history and experience of man there are clear tokens of that Divine Providence, and especially of that Law of Retribution, which he had called in question; that, *as a rule*, the wicked do not thrive, and that, *in the end*, the righteous do. Even now he does not grant, what the Friends had contended for, that all good men have easy lives, while all bad men are instantly punished for their sins, and that therefore loss and suffering are always proofs and

effects of the Divine displeasure. But he confesses that the real and ultimate doom of the wicked — their “doom *from God*,” their “heritage *from the Almighty*” (Chap. xxvii. 13), *i.e.*, the *ideal* doom to which their actual fate is always tending—is perdition; that they cannot for ever escape the pursuing Nemesis of their character and deeds, but must, sooner or later, be overtaken by it (Chap. xxvii. 8–23); and thus he paves the way for the admission that the exceptions to the retributive rule, which he had been tempted to rate as themselves the rule, are *only* exceptions to it, and that even these exceptions may be consistent with the Divine Justice and Goodness. He does not even yet see *how* they can consist with those attributes indeed; but what of that? Man, wise and inventive as he is on a lower plane, is utterly unable to comprehend and vindicate the ways of God; he may dig into the earth and detect its hidden stores, but he cannot climb into heaven and penetrate the very bosom of God. Wisdom belongs to Him alone; and man approaches wisdom only as he lives in the fear of God and hates the evil which He condemns (Chap. xxviii.). And so Job reaches, though by a somewhat different road, and to a very different end, the conclusion of Modern Science—that, while the faculties of man fit him for the investigation of physical phenomena, and enable him to turn them to account, he is unable, by searching, to find out God, to grasp the Eternal Substance, or Force, or Will, which lies behind the phenomena and informs them.

2. But while meditating on the controversy in which he had engaged with the Friends, while determining and formulating the conclusions to which it has led him, Job is also preparing the way for the advent of the

next actor on the scene, for the intervention of Elihu. When *he* speaks, Elihu, as we shall see, is indignant with the Friends because they cannot defend God without accusing Job, and with Job because he cannot defend himself without accusing God. He is sure that there must be some better way, some *via media*, some course by taking which they may steer clear both of the whirlpools and the rocks. The sufferings of the good *must* have an intention consistent at once with the justice of God and the integrity of man. And it surely is a subtle and admirable stroke of art that, before Elihu appears, we should be prepared for his advent by the frank admissions and modified conclusions of Job. For, in confessing his own ignorance, the impossibility that man should apprehend more than the bare "edges" of God's ways, and by granting that Wisdom dwells with God alone, he does virtually admit that God may, and must, have an intention such as that for which Elihu afterward contends in imposing loss and suffering on the upright and the good.

3. It is but fitting, moreover, that we should learn how far Job was able to go *alone*, without help, whether from God or man; to what conclusion he was able to come when, no longer driven to passionate exaggeration by the excitements of controversy, he could adopt all that was substantially true in the arguments of the Friends and discard all that savoured of excess in his own arguments. This conclusion, stated with singular pomp and elaboration in Chapter xxviii., is a very remarkable one. It is remarkable for two reasons: (*a*) for its blended sublimity and humility, and (*β*) because it is but "the abstract and brief chronicle" of Job's own character and life.

(a) In face of the great mysteries by which he is surrounded and perplexed, he concludes that "the place of Understanding" is beyond the reach or ken of man; that Wisdom dwells with God, and, if it come to them at all, can only "come" *from Him* to men; and that, so far as it has come, "the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to eschew evil, that is understanding." With a proud humility, with a strange blending of loftiness and lowliness, he confesses that man is wise, not as he comprehends and can vindicate the ways of God, but in proportion as he reverentially submits to them and adopts them for his own, pursuing that which God has pronounced good, eschewing that which He has condemned as evil. And though to some minds this definition of Wisdom may seem indefinite and mystical, it may be doubted whether any finer or more practical definition of it is even yet to be attained, whether it is not at bottom accepted alike by sceptic and believer.¹

(β) Sublime as it is and worthy of all acceptance, it is, after all, only an abstract translation of the moral character of Job himself, a point somewhat hidden from us by the fact that in our Authorized Version the same Hebrew are not rendered by the same English words. In Chapter i. Verse 8, and again in Chapter ii. Verse 3, Job is described by Jehovah Himself as "one that *feareth God* and *escheweth evil*." And in Chapter xxviii. Verse 28, the secret of true Wisdom is declared in these very words, "Lo, *the fear of the Lord*, that is wisdom, and to *eschew evil* (Authorized Version, "to depart from evil"), that is understanding." So that, in God's eye, *Job* was the very wise man whom

¹ See Commentary on Chap. xxviii. 28.

He here describes, though of all men he himself would have been most surprised to hear it.

But while this end and conclusion is stated with rare elaboration, and with solemn and impressive beauty, in Chapter xxviii., we should not give it its due weight did we not observe that, besides its formal statement in this Chapter, it really pervades and dominates this whole section of the Poem. The way is prepared for it even in Job's final answer to Bildad (Chap. xxvi.), in which he sets forth the universal presence and rule of God in a strain of unusual grandeur, acknowledging and insisting that the Divine Majesty is to be seen, not in heaven alone, but also in Hades, in the earth, in the waters of the firmament and in the waters of the sea, in storm and calm, and in all the events and changes of time. To grasp and comprehend that Majesty is impossible; it is at once too subtle and too vast. We can but see "the edges" of God's ways; we can but hear "a slight whisper" of his voice: the full volume and "thunder of his power" is wholly beyond us. This is the prelude to the noble strain of Chapter xxviii., and is set in the same key with it. And the same strain underlies all the variations of the Chapters which succeed it. Since the fear of the Lord is at once the beginning and the end of wisdom, the fellowship and favour of the Lord must be the sum and crown of human blessedness. It is the loss of this fellowship which we shall hear Job most of all deploring (Chaps. xxix.-xxxi.); it is the recollection of this fellowship which throws the most winning light on the happy days "when the favour of God was on his tent;" it is the restoration of this fellowship which he craves above all else. No less

than six times in the brief compass of four Verses (Chap. xxix. 2-5) does he refer to it as the crowning felicity of his happier estate; and, throughout the Second Monologue, it is either the memory of that Divine communion, or the longing to recover it, which rules his thoughts and gives form and colour to his words.

FIRST MONOLOGUE.

CHAP. XXVII. 1.—*Then Job took up his strain and said :*

2. *As God liveth, who hath denied me justice,*
 And the Almighty, who hath embittered my soul,
3. *All the while my breath is in me,*
 And the spirit of God in my nostrils,
4. *My lips shall not speak iniquity,*
 Nor my tongue utter deceit !
5. *Be it far from me to grant that you are in the right ;*
 Till I breathe my last I will not give up my integrity :
6. *I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go ;*
 My heart shall not upbraid me so long as I live.
7. *May my foe be like the wicked,*
 And he that riseth up against me like the impious !
8. *For what can the impious hope for, though he get him gain,*
 When God shall require his soul ?
9. *Will God hear his cry*
 When trouble cometh upon him ?
10. *Can he delight himself in the Almighty,*
 And at all times invoke the Most High ?
11. *I will teach you of the hand of God,*
 I will not hide that which is with the Almighty.
12. *Behold, ye yourselves have all seen it ;*
 Why then speak ye thus vainly ?
13. *This is the doom of the wicked man from God,*
 And this the heritage of oppressors from the Almighty :—
14. *If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword,*
 And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread ;
15. *His survivors shall be buried by the Pest,*
 And their widows shall not bewail them :

16. *Though he heap up silver like dust,
 And gather robes as mire,*
17. *That which he hath gathered shall the righteous wear,
 And the innocent shall divide his silver :*
18. *He buildeth his house like a moth,
And as a booth which the keeper of a vineyard runneth up :*
19. *He lieth down rich, but it is for the last time ;
 When he openeth his eyes he is no more :*
20. *Terrors overtake him like a flood,
 A whirlwind filcheth him away by night ;*
21. *The East wind catcheth him up and he is gone,
 It hurleth him out of his place :*
22. *God shall cast evils upon him, and spare not,
 Though he would fain escape out of His hand ;*
23. *Men clap their hands at him,
 And hiss him out of his place.*

- CHAP. XXVIII. 1.—*Surely there is a vein for silver,
 And a place for the gold which men wash out ;*
2. *Iron may be taken from the earth,
 And the rock be smelted for copper.*
3. [The miner] *maketh an end of darkness,
 And searcheth through all its limits
For the stones of darkness and of the blackness of death ;*
4. *He sinketh a shaft far from the habitations of men,
 He is forgotten of those who walk above,
 He swingeth suspended afar from men :*
5. *The underparts of the earth, out of which cometh forth bread,
 Are stirred up as if by fire :*
6. *The rocks are the sapphire's bed,
 And yield him gold-dust.*
7. *That path ! no bird of prey knoweth it,
 Nor hath the eye of the hawk scanned it ;*
8. *No proudly-pacing beast hath trodden it,
 Nor lion passed by upon it.*
9. *He putteth forth his hand agains. the quartz,
He turneth up the mountains from their base ;*
10. *He cutteth out canals among the rocks,
 And his eye detecteth every precious thing ;*
11. *He bindeth up waters so that they weep not,
 And bringeth that which is hidden to light.*

12. *But Wisdom—where shall she be gotten ?
And where is the place of Understanding ?*
13. *Man knoweth not her haunt,
For she is not to be found in the land of the living :*
14. *The abyss saith, “ She is not in me ; ”
And the sea saith, “ Nor with me : ”*
15. *Choice gold cannot purchase her,
Nor silver be weighed out as her price ;*
16. *She cannot be bought with the ingot of Ophir,
With the precious onyx and the sapphire ;*
17. *Bright gold and crystal cannot compete with her,
Nor can she be bartered for vessels of fine gold ;*
18. *No mention shall be made of diamonds or gems,
And the price of Wisdom is beyond pearls ;*
19. *The topaz of Cush cannot compare with her,
Nor shall she be weighed with pure gold.*
20. *Whence, then, shall Wisdom come,
And where is the place of Understanding,*
21. *Since it is hidden from the eyes of all living,
And kept close from the fowl of heaven ?*
22. *Abaddon and Death say,
“ Only the rumour of it hath reached our ears ! ”*
23. *God understandeth the way thereof,
And He—He knoweth its place ;*
24. *For He looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth all that is under heaven.*
25. *When He made a weight for the wind,
And meted out the waters by measure ;*
26. *When He made a law for the rain,
And a pathway for the flash with its voice of thunder,*
27. *Then He beheld and declared it,
He gave it its place, and tested it :*
28. *And to man He said, “ Lo, the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom,
And to eschew evil, that is Understanding.”*

CHAPTER xxvii. *Verses 2-4.* The First Monologue opens with an oath. This oath—“as God liveth”—is the first we hear from the lips of Job, and appropriately introduces the more rich and elevated music of this

high "strain." He summons Jehovah, his "Witness" and his "Redeemer," to attest his integrity, even while "he professes to have received but sinister measure from his Judge." This faith in the justice of the God who has "denied him justice," and in the goodness of the God who has "embittered his soul," while it is a special note of Job's character, is not unknown to many who since his day have been perplexed and saddened by the wrongs of time. He does but glance in passing, however, at the fact that God has been moved against him "without cause"—a charge which Jehovah Himself confesses to be true (Chap. ii. 3), and which, therefore, we cannot blame Job for asserting. It is his integrity, and not his wrongs, by which his thoughts are occupied for the moment; and what he emphatically affirms in these Verses is that, as surely as God lives and as long as he himself lives, he will not blemish his integrity by stooping to the "iniquity" and "deceit" of confessing sins of which he is unconscious or of which he is consciously innocent. He lives only by the "breath" or "spirit" of God, which, breathed into his nostrils, made him "a living soul:" to be untrue to himself would be to sin against that "spirit," and so to forfeit his true life.

This reaffirmation of his integrity he proceeds to develope in *Verses* 5 and 6; and if the assertion of his righteousness sound overbold, we must remember both that he asserts it only against the utterly unfounded charges of the Friends, and that even a Christian Apostle, who confessed himself to be the "chief" of sinners, could also say (1 Cor. iv. 4), "I know *nothing* against myself;" *i.e.*, he was utterly unconscious of any wilful guilt, any guilt of which *men* could fairly

charge him, while yet he admitted that he was not thereby "justified" before the Lord. So Job, as he confronts men, can honestly say, "My heart does not reproach any of my days, and shall not so long as I live," and yet, when bending before God, confess, "I am vile."

Verse 7 is a point of transition; and however we translate it—and it is so charged with emotion as to be very difficult to convey from one language to another—it must not be taken as an imprecation, but rather as affirming that it is not Job himself, but his enemies and gainsayers, those who branded him as wicked, who are really wicked; it is they who, in condemning him, condemn themselves. And hence, though the Verse is emotional and ejaculatory in form, we shall do well to take as at least an alternative rendering of it:—

It is my foe who is like the wicked,
And he that riseth up against me who is like the impious.

From this Verse onward some critics, from Verse 13 onward many critics, assume, simply from internal evidence, that words are put into Job's mouth which really belong to Zophar; that, in fact, we have here that third speech of his, of which, as the Poem stands, we have no record; or that, at least, Job is here stating the view held by the Friends, and not his own view. There are, however, many reasons in the structure of these Verses which render any such theory improbable, though with these we need not concern ourselves, since a really careful and sympathetic study of the Verses proves them to be perfectly appropriate—necessary even to the development of the Poem—in the mouth of Job, and shews the conjectures of the "higher cri-

ticism" to be wholly unnecessary.¹ It is quite true that, in opposition to the Friends, Job had argued that the wicked often pass their days in mirth and affluence, and end them by a sudden and painless death. But he nowhere affirms, as we have seen (*Vide* Comments on Chaps. xxi. and xxiv.), that *all* the wicked are thus fortunate, or, in a deeper sense, unfortunate, or that a due retribution *never* overtakes them; so that he may now very consistently give us the darker, as before he had given us the lighter, aspect of their lot. And, moreover, is a man, a man, too, who "above all other strifes contends to know himself," to learn nothing from experience, from long and painful meditation on human character and destiny? Is a poet, and a poet who "takes all knowledge for his province," to conduct a long and intricate argument without advancing toward his conclusion, or even without holding any conclusion

¹ Perhaps I may take this opportunity of recommending those who have been distressed and perplexed by the way in which this school has handled the Bible, and especially the poetry of the Bible, to study their treatment of the great masters of classical and modern times—Shakespeare, for instance, and Virgil. Their feeble, contradictory, and ludicrous assumptions and conclusions on this lower range of literature are the best tonic for any who tremble lest the Bible should ultimately suffer harm or loss at their hands. Mr. Myers has exposed their arrogance and absurd incompetency in a very able article on Virgil in "The Fortnightly Review," from which I take a single brief extract. "Thus one of them objects to Dido's 'auburn tress' on the ground that a widow's hair *should be* of a darker colour! Another questions whether a broken heart can be properly termed 'a fresh wound,' if a lady has been suffering from it for *more than a week!*" While Ribbeck, one of the highest critics of this higher school, "alters the text of Virgil, in defiance of all the manuscripts, because the poet's picture (*Æneid*, xii. 55) of Amata, 'self-doomed to die, clasping for the last time her impetuous son-in-law,' seems to him tame and unsatisfactory. By the alteration of *moritura* into *monitura*, he is able to represent Amata as clinging to Turnus, not 'with the intention of killing herself,' but 'with the intention of giving advice,' *which he considers as the more impressive and fitting attitude for a mother-in-law!*" For myself, I am profoundly thankful to these gentlemen for having taken Shakespeare in hand; for till I read their prelections on his "works," I was not sure to what this high *a priori* criticism might lead, and never suspected what *idiots* (in the classical sense of the word) they might be, or of what very "*private* interpretations" they were capable.

in view? is he, "like the damned in the Grecian Tartarus, to spin for ever on the same wheel, round the same pivot"? Surely we might fairly have blamed the Poet, as deficient both in the dramatic instinct and in the art of reasonable discussion, if he had *not* portrayed Job as advancing, through meditation and discussion, and above all under the pressure of painful and wider experience, to larger and more settled views of human destiny; and as making that advance mainly when the confusing excitements of controversy were subsiding, and the voice of reason could be more clearly heard.

And in these Verses Job does, as has been said, both modify, or complete, his view of the lot of the wicked, and state it more temperately, adopting whatever he felt to be true in the contention of the Friends. But it is to be observed that, while Job in part adopts that contention, he holds it with a vital difference, draws a wholly opposite conclusion from it, and turns it *against* the very position which they had assumed. He grants what they had affirmed, what he himself had questioned, that to be wicked is to be miserable, though even yet he does not affirm, as they had done, either that to be wicked is to be in all cases *instantly* miserable, or that *all* the miserable must be wicked. But why does he grant it? Only to refute their inference from it. They had held up the doom of the wicked before him as a mirror in which he was to *see himself*, and confess that *he* was wicked; and now he holds up this selfsame mirror before them, that *they may see themselves* in it, and confess that it is not he, but his traducers and gainsayers (See Note on Verse 7) who are really wicked in the sight of God. To take these

Verses from the mouth of Job, and to put them into the lips of Zophar or any of the Friends, is therefore to shew an entire misapprehension of their true scope and meaning. The critics who are guilty of it simply condemn themselves as lacking in the literary instinct and power on which they found their claim to a "higher criticism" than that of their fellows. Exalting themselves, they are abased.

These general remarks furnish the key to the whole Chapter. From this point of view, what *Verses* 7-12 really come to is this: "I cannot and will not belie my conscience by confessing the sins with which you have charged me. It is not *I* that am wicked, but *you* who rise up against me with censures for which you can adduce no proof, which you simply infer from the calamities laid upon me. Your pictures of the doom of the wicked are not true of me; for while *he* has no hope in his death, *I* look for a judgment to come, in which my integrity will be vindicated and my wrongs redressed: while *he* cannot call upon God in his trouble, *I* am incessantly calling on Him, and beseeching Him to shew Himself to me: while *he* cannot delight himself in God, *I* feel his favour to be life, and his lovingkindness better than life. *His* lot is not mine; his doom is not mine. What his real heritage is, his 'heritage from the Almighty,' I will teach you, though indeed ye have all seen it for yourselves and proclaimed it. Why, then, having seen it, do ye thus vainly contend that my lot resembles his?"

To this general interpretation of the Verses nothing need be added, perhaps, except a brief note on *Verse* 8. The word here used for "gain" denotes "*wrongful* gain," the implication being that all that the wicked ac-

quire is wrongfully acquired, does not properly belong to them, has at least the evil taint which rests on the possessions of those who "love money" and make it their god. The word translated "*require*"—a fine strong word, very suitable here, when we remember the meaning put into it by Him who said, "This night shall thy soul be *required* of thee"—means literally to "draw out," and implies that the reluctant soul of the opulent but unrighteous man will be drawn out of the body to which it clings, as a rusty sword is drawn from its rusted scabbard: the line might be rendered, "When God shall *unscath* his soul," and in that rendering of it is rife with food for meditation. But the most noticeable point in the Verse is "the instinctive and ineradicable faith" in an after-life implied in it. Quite unconsciously, Job betrays how deeply the conviction expressed in the Monumental Inscription (Chap. xix. 23-27) had entered into his soul, how profoundly he now believed that "there is another comfort than this world." For if there were no retributive life to come, how could there be any question of what a man may hope for "when God shall require his soul"? And yet how carelessly, as it were, how naturally and instinctively, how much as matter of course, Job assumes that even the godless man has *something* to look for at that supreme moment!

Verses 13-23 contain Job's formal and final statement of the doom and heritage of the wicked man; that which pertains to him by a Divine decree, *i.e.*, by a natural propriety and fitness; that ideal destiny which is in the mind of the Almighty, and will sooner or later come from it; that doom which is the proper and natural issue of his character and ways in the judg-

ment of God, and which must therefore be reached at last. Just as Shakespeare makes Gratiano say to the still wealthy "Merchant of Venice,"

You have too much respect upon the world ;
They lose it that do buy it with much care ;

so Job declares of the wicked man, however prosperous he may be for the moment, that the general law of his case is, that those who gain wealth and power unjustly, who "fear not God nor regard man," lose, and must lose, what they have bought with so much care and pains. There is a doom in their very deeds ; their very character doth "presage some ill event ;" they may escape it for a time, and for a long time, but in due time they infallibly get their due.

So far Job modifies his former statements. Whereas he had spoken of the wicked as not receiving the due reward of their deeds, at least in their own persons and during the brief span of time (Chap. xxi. 19-21), that "ceaseless lackey of eternity," he now admits that, despite apparent exceptions, the law of retribution holds good, that it *is* the law, that God has appointed and will execute it. Looking out on human life as a whole, he confesses that to be bad *is* to be miserable and accursed, that sin carries its own penalty within itself ; and to this thesis he gives a highly wrought and highly coloured expression. Sword, Famine, and Pestilence are, according to him, the three avenging furies which pursue and overtake the proud self-confident sinner, and even his offspring and survivors (*Verses* 14 and 15) : and no doubt he selects these three—Pestilence, Famine, Sword—because they were the calamities most common in the East and most

"feared of man." He *had* complained that the wicked "send forth their children like a flock" (Chap. xxi. 11); he now confesses that, numerous as they may be, they are all "for the sword." He had complained that their "loins were full of fat" (Chap. xxi. 24); he now admits that they "shall not be satisfied with bread." He had complained that no scourge of God fell on them, that they were borne to the tomb with pomp and that watch was kept over their pile (Chap. xxi. 9, 32); he now foresees and admits that they will be smitten by the pestilence; nay, in a fine impersonation, he depicts them as "*buried* by the Pest," as denied, that is, the usual funeral solemnities, as hurried to an unknown grave, unmourned and unwept even by those who loved them best. What boots their wealth in silver and in "robes"? — this latter being one of the commonest forms of wealth in the East, where, to this day, changes of raiment and costly and begemmed dresses of state are customary presents. Let them gather them up like "mire" — a familiar Biblical emblem of the abundance in which even things most costly lose their value. They will but enrich the righteous when the avenging Nemesis sweeps away the evil-doer and his offspring (*Verses* 16 and 17). What though their "house" be sumptuous as a palace and strong as a fortress? In the day of vengeance it will prove frail as the silky cocoon woven by the moth, or the booth run up of mats and sticks in which, for the brief weeks of harvest, the watchman of the vineyard protected the harvest from the depredations of thieves, birds, wild beasts, and wandering cattle (*Verse* 18). Kindling and rising as he speaks, Job throws off (in *Verses* 19–23) a series of graphic figures, each of which sets

forth the doom that awaits the unrighteous, emphasizing especially the suddenness and the utterness of his overthrow. In *Verse* 19, which is somewhat obscure, he seems to pourtray the sinner who has grown wealthy by wrong as lying down rich at night, without suspecting that it is for the last time, though it is the last; or as opening his eyes in the morning, without suspecting that he shall never open them again, though Death is about to close them for ever. In *Verses* 20 and 21—still to denote the sudden and violent surprise of his end, and so presenting another aspect of that sudden death which Job had once reckoned (*Chap.* xxi. 13) among the blessings of the prosperous wicked—he introduces the metaphors of the flood, the whirlwind, and the east wind, storms with an east wind being very rare in the East, but so severe and destructive when they do occur as to smite down whole villages and to uproot the largest trees. And, in *Verses* 22 and 23, he pourtrays God and man as turning against the poor wretch with whom all the forces of Nature are at strife—God shooting or raining down upon him a succession of evils from above, which it is impossible for him to escape; while, below, men “clap their hands” at him—an Eastern token of malignant delight, and “hiss him out of his place”—hissing being all the world over a token of hatred and contempt.

The description is so tremendous as almost to quicken our sympathy with the hunted and abandoned fugitive who meets the menacing glare of Death and Ruin at every turn. And perhaps we ought not to be surprised that certain critics—save that it is the very office and function of the critic to detect the more subtle strokes of intention and art—find this descrip

tion of the lot and doom of the wicked so opposed to the earlier descriptions given by Job, that they are disposed to ascribe it to other lips than his. There is, however, not only, as we have seen, no need thus to recast the passage : but, further, we absolutely cannot do it without snapping many subtle links of connection between this and other parts of the Poem, and so impairing its unity and its force. If, for example, we turn to Chapter xxi. — the Chapter to which we have so often referred, since in this Chapter Job most fully delineates the prosperity of the wicked, and seems at the farthest remove from his present mood—we may see that that delineation is most craftily qualified, and that all sympathy with it is openly repudiated. After elaborating a description of their prosperity (Chap. xxi. 7–15) which reads like a pastoral idyll, so subtle-sweet is its music, he himself bids us mark (*Verse 16*) that after all “their prosperity is *not in their own hand*,” but in the hand of God. He calls our attention to this fact as though to set us thinking of the insecure tenure on which their prosperity is held, if not on the certainty that, God being just, it is doomed to perdition. And, then, in the same Verse, as if *he* discerned some horror in the distance which *we* cannot see, he breaks into the formula of aversion and abhorrence : “*Far from me be the counsel of the wicked !*” Is it not as if he forewarned us that there is another and a darker aspect of their lot which he cannot yet delineate, but which renders the mere thought of sharing their prosperity horrible to him, too horrible to be entertained for a moment ? And if he now (in Chap. xxvii.) delineates that darker aspect, what ground have we for pronounc-

ing him inconsistent and for taking his words out of his mouth?

We must also, if we would judge him fairly, consider the end he had in view *then* and *now*. *Then*, he was bent on meeting Zophar's extravagant and reckless dogma (Chap. xx.) that the wicked are *always and instantly* arrested by the due punishment of their sins, and that *none but* the wicked suffer such things as these. And he meets the assertion of this crude and cruel dogma by citing patent and notorious facts which ran right in its teeth, by adducing the long-continued prosperity enjoyed by some of the wickedest of men, and the terrible and crushing adversities which at least some good men are called to endure. But, *now*, his end is different, and he approaches it by a different road. The Friends had wanted him to see himself in their portraiture of the lot and fate of the wicked man. And he meets them, not by denying the truth of their description, but by shewing them that *it was not true of him*. It is not simply that

No more can they distinguish of a man
Than of his outward show ; which, God He knows,
Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.

What Job affirms of them is that they have failed to read and interpret even the "outward show" of his life. And so he takes up the pencil they had dropped, draws the lot and fate of the wicked in still more terrible lines and hues than theirs, and then defies them to trace any resemblance in it to his own lot and fate. His children had *not* been destroyed by sword, famine, and pestilence, but by the immediate hand of God. His wealth had *not* been transferred to the righteous, but carried off by caterans. He had *not*

been surprised out of life in a moment as by a flood or a whirlwind, but condemned to a lingering malady, a living death. And, above all, instead of fleeing from God, and seeking to escape the evils rained down upon him from Heaven, he had fled to God, and was still knocking at his gate, pursuing Him with the inquest of his beseeching looks, besieging Him with his importunate cries for justice and redress, content to risk, and even to endure, all evils, if only he might find God and speak with Him. And, surely, there is no inconsistency here, but rather a subtle harmony and concert.

S. COX.

FAITH AS A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED.

ST. MATTHEW xvii. 20 ; ST. LUKE xvii. 6.

THE view of the meaning of the words, *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed*, generally taken is that set forth by Chrysostom :¹ " To indicate that even the least degree of genuine faith can do great things, He mentioned the mustard seed ;" and more recently and vigorously by Olshausen (*in loc.*) : " If ye have faith ready, and hold it fast for the moment when ye are called to use it and to prove it, all distinction between little and much, small and great faith, then falls to the ground : the smallest measure of real living power of faith, disturbed at the moment by no unbelief and doubt, is sufficient to accomplish the greatest things." According to this, the traditional and now current interpretation, the point of comparison is the smallness of the mustard seed. Trench² refers to another view : " Faith as a grain of mustard seed means lively faith,

¹ Homily on Matthew xvii. 20.

² " Miracles," p. 370.

with allusion to the keen and biting powers of that grain ;" but adds : " It certainly is not upon this side that the comparison is to be brought out ; rather it is the smallest faith that shall be effectual to work the mightiest work."

Olshausen's notion of a " faith which is of the smallest measure," and yet is " disturbed by no doubt," lacks clearness ; for surely an undoubting faith is the greatest faith. Whether such a faith can be momentary—" at the moment"—is another point open to serious question. But that which seems fatal to this interpretation is that it is utterly inconsistent with the whole context in which our Lord's great saying is found.

And, first : How does it agree, how can it be made to agree, with the warning, " Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting " ? Are such special means as these necessary to the exercise of the smallest amount of faith ? Scarcely. Secondly : in St. Luke our Lord's words are a reply to the request of the apostles, *Increase our faith*. To assure them that the smallest modicum of faith was adequate to the working of the greatest works, would surely have been a strange answer to such a prayer. Must it not have suggested the thought, Why, then, need our faith be increased ? Thirdly : Is it not opposed to both the letter and spirit of passages in which strong faith, undoubting faith (as in Matthew xxi. 21), is commended and enjoined, and its absence deplored or reproved ?

To try to escape this inconsistency by a resort to the gloss, You ask for faith : if you only had a faith as large as a grain of mustard seed, *provided you had but confidence in your faith*, provided you had but the courage of your faith, or made a right use of it, you would

be able to remove mountains, and so forth, is to substitute faith in our own faith for faith in God—a very common and a very pernicious error.

On these grounds I venture to differ from the traditional interpretation, and in its place to propose the following. Christ sets up the mustard seed as an example of what, in so far as faith is concerned, the disciples ought to be. If your faith, relatively to you, were as great as the faith of the mustard seed is relatively to it, you would as easily remove mountains, or uproot trees, as the mustard seed grows into the greatest of all plants.

But it may be objected, How can a mustard seed be spoken of as having faith? We must not forget that Christ uses the mustard seed analogically, and that comparisons between man and the creatures below him never go on all fours: up to a certain point they hold good; beyond that point they become incongruous. Of course it is not literally true that a mustard seed has faith, but neither is that the question. The real question is, What is there in the seed and its behaviour which fits it to be set forth as an example to men? And I suggest that what our Lord really sets before us by this illustration is the important general principle, that *if men exercised faith to the degree to which the mustard seed puts forth the power in it which answers to faith in man, it would be as easy and natural for them to work wonders as for the mustard seed to become the greatest of herbs.*

Growth depends on the assimilation of nutriment. The assimilation of nutriment is a process in which two factors co-operate: the one, the seed or germ; the other, the surrounding or environment. Each

must be fitted to the other ; each especially must act on the other. Without suitable surroundings no seed will begin to germinate, that is, act ; without action on the part of the seed, no surrounding, however suitable, will produce growth. Given the same surrounding, any differences in the plants which grow out of the seeds must be attributed to the seeds themselves. As every gardener knows, the same culture will not guarantee the same result. But were the action of a seed purely mechanical, there could be no uncertainty ; for men are able to calculate exactly what certain mechanical forces will do in certain given conditions. The reason of the differences lies therefore, without doubt, in the constitution of the seed, whether as originally given to it or as subsequently modified ; for we can scarcely attribute its attitude towards the environment to conscious choice or caprice. On the contrary, so far as its power goes, it acts normally—it assimilates what it can assimilate, and grows unto what it can become. How should this behaviour be described, speaking after the manner of men ? We should say that the seed makes full use of its opportunities ; or, still speaking anthropomorphically, that it unhesitatingly recognizes, accepts, falls in with, the order and constitution of the system to which it belongs. As a matter of fact, a seed that grows properly *does* thus behave : the anthropomorphism of which I spoke lies solely in attributing to it *intention* of any degree or form. It cannot behave otherwise than it does ; but yet its actual behaviour, whatever may be the actual cause of it, is an acceptance of the position in which it is placed. If we could imagine any hesitation on its part to lay hold on that which is presented to it, whatever might be its original

constitution, there could be no satisfactory result. In one word, the secret of growth, so far as the share borne by the seed is concerned, lies in the action by which it appropriates the nutriment provided in its environment, which action rests upon what may be termed an acceptance of the order in which it finds itself.

Let us now turn to man. Like the mustard seed, man must be placed in an appropriate environment, and must behave towards that environment in a certain manner. Of him also it holds good that he must act as well as be acted on. If his surroundings fail to offer fitting nutriment, or if he fail to appropriate the fitting nutriment put within his reach, he will either perish, or at least attain but a stunted growth. As soon as man loses the capability of acting in response to the forces which act upon him, whether physical, intellectual, or personal, he shrivels and dies. So that in his case, as truly as in the case of a seed, the secret of growth is the due assimilation of the nutriment provided in his environment. Up to this point, the same language may be used of both.

Speaking anthropomorphically, this action of the seed implies, as we have seen, an acceptance of the order in which it is placed. And what the seed does blindly, man has to do consciously. At the earliest stages of his existence, indeed, his recognition of the order and constitution of the world is as blind and necessary as that of a mustard seed; but with every approach to maturity he becomes more and more capable of taking his behaviour, whether it be recognition or assimilation, into his own hands—that is, of adopting it by conscious choice. *Now the relation thus*

consciously assumed by man is faith. His behaviour and that of a seed, looked at as a simple relation, are identical : it is in virtue of the consciousness and freedom with which it is associated in man that it becomes faith.

Let us take as an illustration the simple act of eating bread. When we eat, we trust, first, the fellow-man who gives us the bread as fit for food. Then we trust our senses, when they tell us that what we have before us to-day is the same as what we found to be bread yesterday. We further trust the order of Nature in assuming that the bread of to-day will nourish us as it did yesterday. In addition, we trust the baker ; the baker trusts the miller ; the miller the farmer ; each of those in his turn trusts others ; and every one of them has constantly to take for granted that the forces and laws of Nature continue the same from day to day and from year to year. A want of trust at any one point in the long chain which puts bread into our hands would arrest the process by which we derive nutriment from our daily bread. Not otherwise is it with the intellect, which draws its nutriment also from the world in which it is placed. In point of fact, at the back of every movement towards the appropriation of material of growth, whether of body or of mind, there is faith—implicit or explicit, conscious or unconscious. Generally speaking, the faith is implicit and unconscious, though at times, owing to special causes, it becomes explicit and conscious.

In the domains both of our physical and intellectual life, faith is the necessary condition of assimilation ; in that of the heart or of the emotions, through which we enter into relationship to persons, faith is not merely

the condition of appropriation, but also its beginning. Mutual trust between persons is, so far as it goes, mutual appropriation. At any rate there can be no doubt that, where there is no mutual trust, there can be no mutual communication of the specifically personal life. And as personal life can only develop and work as it is nourished by personal life or by communications therefrom, it is clear that here again faith is indispensably necessary.

If the environment from which man is intended to draw nutriment contained nothing but the creatural, in other words, if he were correlated solely to Nature and man, it is obvious that no assimilation, however complete and normal, could secure for him a growth involving the power over Nature referred to in the passages under consideration. Those whose faith and consequent appropriation is restricted to the seen and temporal, must needs restrict their conscious action thereto, and be bound down by its conditions.

But this order of things includes more and higher—it includes God Himself, and man is constituted to derive nutriment and life from Him. To use the scholastic expressions, man is *capax infiniti* as well as *finiti*. Just as he is made to draw nutrition for the body from the purely physical world, and for the mind from the intellectual world, so is he made to draw nutrition from God. Constituted as the universe is, and constituted as man is, the one is as natural as the other. Both relationships, too, are regulated by the same law—there is no appropriation without faith.

Now as man grows, corporeally, by what he draws from the physical world, and intellectually by what he draws from the intellectual world, and emotionally by

his fellowship with other hearts, and thus becomes capable of doing in each sphere the work devolving upon him, so, through the assimilation of God, must he acquire strength for specific work. What is that strength? What is that work? He becomes increasingly one with God, and God becomes increasingly one with him; so that God can work in and through him, and he can work in and through God. In a word, he becomes a sharer in the Divine strength. This may seem to be bold language, but it is the language of the Bible, and it is in conformity with the order of the world. Man and Nature work in and through each other, because each dwells in the other; and God, yea, God Himself, is no exception to the law, because it was He who constituted the universe what it is.

But, if this be true, to the extent to which we are God's and God is ours, to that extent we shall hold God's relation to the rest of the universe. What that relationship is I need not here describe. He who made and rules nature can also use it for his purposes. If He see fit, He can alter its arrangements, whether those arrangements be between atom and atom or between sun and sun. It is of course quite true that the so-called laws of Nature are his own laws—the modes in which He has ordained that natural forces shall move and act; and if there were nothing in the universe higher than mere Nature, God would never interfere with its constitution and order. But there are spiritual as well as natural forces; there are therefore spiritual as well as natural laws, and the latter exist for the sake of the former. Even under ordinary circumstances the spiritual exerts some sway over the natural;

so, at all events, all implicitly or explicitly concede who recognize a real distinction between human thought and volition and mechanical and vital movements. How much more should such sway be expected when extraordinary circumstances arise! An extraordinary, that is, a miraculous subordination of the natural to the spiritual, would then be no less orderly than the common subordination of nature to the spirit and will of man. So far, therefore, as men become one with God by faith, so far will they share the Divine power of using, moulding, rearranging, swaying the natural, for the sake and in the interest of the spiritual; in other words, the Divine power of working miracles.

This, in my judgment, is what Christ means when He says, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove." The mustard seed developes its full power because it assimilates all that is within its capacity to assimilate; and when man shall have assimilated all that it is within his capacity to assimilate—which includes the life of God Himself—he too will develop his full power, that is, a power to which nothing shall be impossible.

Nothing will be impossible to the believer that is not impossible to God Himself! But the ground of his power is the limit of its exercise. And here is the answer to the objection that, if my interpretation of our Lord's saying be true, then every believing man should be able to work miracles at his own pleasure. It must be remembered that the power in question is due to oneness with God; that oneness with God springs from faith; that to wish to work a miracle not inspired by God must be to interfere, to the degree of

that wish, with the oneness with God which is the secret of our power; and that, in one word, the faith supposed by the objection is in reality unbelief, and, as such, does not come within the range of our Lord's promise. If it is true that by faith God's power becomes ours, it is equally true that our power then becomes God's; and in such an union it is as impossible for us to use God's power for ends foreign to his purposes as it is impossible for God to use man's power for ends contrary to man's good.

For my own part I am inclined to believe that the growth of individual believers into such power as Christ here promises depends on a collective growth of the Church; but that when the Church shall be as a whole full, through faith, of Divine life and power, then, if the furtherance of God's spiritual purposes demand it, elect souls will arise who shall be able to say to a mountain, whatever it may be, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; or to a tree, whatever it may be, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey them: nay, more, no miracle, however great, shall be impossible to them.

D. W. SIMON.

SOME TRACES OF A HEBREW GOSPEL.

NOT long ago the pages of THE EXPOSITOR¹ contained a discussion of much interest concerning the language commonly used by our blessed Lord during his min-

¹ Vol. vi. pp. 81, 161, 285, 307; Vol. vii. pp. 81, 278, 368. The writers of the articles above alluded to did not notice that in the exclamation of our Lord on the cross (Psa. xxii. 1), the words of the Hebrew Psalm are not quoted, but that, instead of the Hebrew *ázabthani*, we have the Aramaic *sabachthani*. These words,

istry. In the course of the discussion incidental allusions were made to the language in which some of the Gospels originally appeared. It may therefore be interesting to give some notice of what appears to be a trace of the existence of a Hebrew Gospel. The passage in which such a trace seems to be contained is one of the treatises of the Babylonish Talmud. It is not necessary to discuss the date of the Talmud in its present form. Unquestionably, it has undergone several modifications in its composition; but the way in which Jewish tradition was constantly handed on, with a religious care that the original authorities should be named, and sometimes also the channels through which the narrative had come, makes it almost a matter of certainty that, when a story in the Talmud is definitely connected, as is the one about to be quoted, with the names of individuals, its truthfulness is not open to much doubt.

Now there is found in such a narrative a sentence which, from its form, can hardly be anything short of one of the utterances of our Lord. But before giving the extract in which these words are found, it will be necessary to give some historical notice of the actors in the story, in order to render it intelligible, and to shew how closely the incident recorded in it goes back to the time of our Lord's life.

The Gamaliel who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles¹ had a son, Shimeon, whose son Gamaliel II.,

uttered in the midst of great agony, would most likely be given in the form in which they had been most familiar to Jesus, and in which He had used them in his home in Galilee. The mistake of the crowd, who supposed that Elias was being invoked, also points to a dialectic peculiarity in the pronunciation of the Aramaic; and that there was such a peculiarity in the accent of our Lord and his companions, is apparent from the remark made to St. Peter (Matt. xxvi. 73), "Surely thou art one of *them*, for thy *speech* bewrayeth thee."

¹ Acts vi. 34; xxii. 3.

and daughter Imma Shalom (the name which in the New Testament becomes *Salome*), are the persons of whom the story to be quoted is told. Imma Shalom was married to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus. Shimeon, the son of Gamaliel I., was in all probability older than St. Paul; and so his children may have been alive even in the life of our Saviour, and they certainly saw the Temple before its destruction by the Romans, A.D. 70. Rabbi Eliezer was one of the most learned men of his time, and to him is ascribed the book known as *Pirke Rabbi Eliezer*. It is said of him,¹ "If all the wise men of Israel were put in one scale of a balance, and Eliezer ben Hyrcanus in the other, he would outweigh them all." But in spite of all his fame among his own people, he fell under a suspicion of being favourable to the doctrines of Christianity: we are even told² that on one occasion he was brought before the Roman authorities on such a charge;³ and his language at that time is such as to shew that he had been much interested in the new teaching.

Now it is clear that the wife of such a man, if she were attached to her own religion, would do all in her power, and get all the help she could, to wean her husband from what she would naturally feel were dangerous tendencies. It seems probable that the action described in the following extract⁴ from the Talmud was due to some such desire.

"Imma Shalom was the wife of Rabbi Eliezer, and the sister of Rabban Gamaliel (the second). Now there

¹ *Pirke Aboth*, ii. 11.

² *Midrash Rabbah* on Eccles., i. 8.

³ This is worthy of being remembered by those who consider that much of the persecution which fell upon the early Christians was inflicted on them by people who made no distinction between Jews and Christians.

⁴ *Talm. Babl. Shabbath*, 116 a, 116 b.

was a *Philosophus*¹ in their neighbourhood, who had got a name for not taking bribes, and they (Imma Shalom and Gamaliel) wished to turn him into ridicule. So she brought him a present of a golden lamp, and they came before him (as if to take his opinion). She said to him, I should like them to divide for me the property of our family. He said, Divide it. He (Gamaliel) said to him, It is written for us (*i.e.*, in the Old Testament Scriptures), Where there is a son, a daughter doth not inherit. He answered, From the day that ye were removed from your land, the law of Moses was taken away, and another law was given; and therein it is written, *The son and the daughter shall inherit alike*. Next day he (Rabban Gamaliel) brought him (the *Philosophus*) a Libyan ass (a valuable present in Eastern countries). Then he said to them, I have sunk myself down (*i.e.*, read further on) in the book, and it is there written, *I am not come to take away from the law of Moses, neither to add to the law of Moses am I come*. And it is written there (*i.e.*, in the Mosaic law), Where there is a son, a daughter doth not inherit. She said to him, Let thy light shine as the lamp (thus giving him a pointed reminder of yesterday's gift). But Rabban Gamaliel said, The ass has come and kicked down the lamp."

With the history of this family in our minds, we can readily understand the motive of this brother and sister in making a visit to a Christian, exactly after the fashion in which Jews went to their own Rabbi; only that their object was not to be guided by his advice, but, by finding out his weakness, to be able to hold him up to Rabbi Eliezer as a pretender to a virtue in one

¹ A various reading renders it probable that the word here was *Episcopus*. The man was clearly a person of distinction, and looked up to as an authority among the Christians.

respect (*viz.*, his superiority to the temptation of a bribe) which he did not possess, and that therefore he was most likely an impostor in all.

We can see, also, in the conduct here narrated, an illustration of that tendency which St. Paul rebukes in the Christian congregations in Corinth: "Brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers."¹ Here are two persons, who must have held a distinguished place in the Jewish society among which they lived, who go for an opinion to a teacher to whose religious lessons they are most strongly opposed. It does not matter that the visit before us was made only to turn the teacher into ridicule. The fact of the visit being made, as if in search of an opinion by which they might be guided, shews that such occurrences were probably not infrequent where Jews, Christians, and heathens were dwelling in one community.

It is interesting to notice that the Christian teacher was settled, and his views well known, among a Jewish population. It is most likely that the incident occurred at Jamnia, where, through the influence of Jochanan ben Zakkai (*Zacchæus*), the Jews, or the most distinguished part of them, were allowed by Vespasian to settle, and make, as it were, another Jerusalem. We can see from the phraseology—"From the day that ye were removed from your land"—that the story goes back to the times when the generation lived who had been in Jerusalem at the overthrow.

This Christian teacher, to whom their visit was made, is represented to us as speaking of another law which he places on a level with the law of Moses, and which he declares to have superseded that law since the

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 6.

overthrow of Jerusalem. This new law he possesses in a *book*, *i.e.*, in a roll, as a collected volume, exactly in the same way as he possesses the Pentateuch. We therefore cannot doubt that, whatever it was which he had, it was a complete work ; for he says at the second visit, "I have read further on in the book." The words preserved to us as extracts from this book are not exactly a rendering of any Verses in our Gospels ; but there are many reasons why this was likely to be the case. We can see that even Rabban Gamaliel, in quoting from the Old Testament, gives rather the spirit than the letter of the law. There is no such sentence to be found in Holy Writ as, "Where there is a son, a daughter does not inherit." The words of Scripture are, "If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter."¹ From which sentence the rule was derived which Gamaliel propounds. We may in the same way suppose that the quotations made by the *Philosophus* are not to be taken as literal extracts from his book.

But we may, on the contrary, believe that they are the very words of some one of those many accounts of the Gospel history to which St. Luke alludes in the preface of his Gospel ; and that in an Aramaic Version the words of Jesus had been given forth to some audience in the form which they have here retained, and had been so recorded in a Gospel long since lost.

The two passages quoted from his book by the *Philosophus* do not, however, stand on the same footing. For the first—"The son and the daughter shall inherit alike"—we have no parallel whatever in the Gospels. But when we turn to the lessons inculcated

¹ Num. xxvii. 8.

by the apostles, we find something which may have very well been the outcome of such teaching as is here described as contained in one part of the book. St. Paul's lesson to the Galatians breathes the same spirit. "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female."¹ There may well have been an utterance of Christ on which these words of his great Apostle are grounded, and which—like "It is more blessed to give than to receive"²—have found no place in any Gospel, but are among those many things of which St. John hyperbolically says "the world could not contain the books," if they had been recorded every one.

But it is also rendered very probable that our Saviour did utter more than once some such lessons as that which spake of the equality of man and woman, if we consider who were those who so closely followed Him and ministered unto Him during his public life. It would be difficult to find any other great teacher of old times about whom it is so often mentioned that, in the throng about him, women were included. Yet this is a marked feature in the story of Christ's life on earth. Among the Jews, as we can see from this narrative, the position of women was an inferior one to that of men. And there are traces of the same inferiority in the Gospels, notably in that thought which is attributed to the disciples when they came back and found their Lord talking with the woman of Samaria: "And they wondered that he talked with *a woman*"³ (μετὰ γυναικός). There must have been a different feeling in Christ's mind from that current among his countrymen, and the feeling must have manifested itself by actions and words before He brought about Him the ministra-

¹ Gal. iii. 28.² Acts xx. 35.³ John iv. 27.

tions of so many women ; else it would not have been said of Him that " Jesus loved Mary and her sister Martha," and we should not have heard of the women at the cross, and the women bringing spices to the grave of their crucified Teacher. It is therefore in no wise impossible that, among the sayings of Jesus, may have been some not preserved in our Gospels, which spake in the tone of this text of the *Philosophus* in the Talmud, and said, " Son and daughter shall inherit alike."

But when we come to consider the second text, we seem to be on much firmer ground. We have a sentence couched exactly in the form in which Jesus is reported to have spoken in the discourse in which He sets forth more fully than elsewhere the spirit of the gospel, and the changes which He sought to work among his followers, and through them upon the world. No other teacher had spoken to the Jews as though he personally could contemplate the law of Moses as something that might be changed. But, " Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," ¹ is in the very tone of the words of the text quoted by the *Philosophus*. The sentiment is the same, and the use of the first person, in a sentence quoted from what is called " another law," and placed on a level with that of Moses, stamps the quotation as one that can be referred to no other speaker than Jesus, on whose followers we see that the actors in this story had the strongest motive for casting ridicule. In these words we have a sentence of Jesus in such shape as oral teaching had caused it to assume. And the words so

¹ Matt. v. 17.

preserved were part of a book containing that "other law" by which the Christian teacher was guided, and prepared to give his guidance to others. Such a book can hardly have been anything else than the Gospel in Hebrew.

Accepting this conclusion, there are a few reflections which may be made upon it in reference to those Gospels which have been preserved to us. No doubt the early Church selected for circulation, and for insertion in the canon of Scripture, those narratives of the life of Jesus which were stamped with the greatest authority, and had gained the widest acceptance in the Church, and that in them we have a faithful picture of such events in the life of our Saviour as they deal with. But the earliest of the Synoptic Gospels was probably not put into its present form for a quarter of a century after the Crucifixion. Notes of discourses may have been, and most probably were, preserved from the first; but there were no doubt many circumstances related by the apostles to their first congregations which have not been included in any Gospel. And we can easily understand how variations in reported narratives may go to much greater extent than the difference between the passage of St. Matthew and the Version which the *Philosophus* of the Talmud seems to have had, without there being any designed deviation from a correct report. The variations therefore which we find in the narratives of the Evangelists ought not to weaken their credit in any degree, for verbal accord was not what their writers desired to attain. Each from his own point of view wished to present Christ as He lived, and to give to others the impression which had been produced upon himself.

And it was, no doubt, well for the truthfulness of the picture that the histories were not written down as soon as possible after the Crucifixion. The lapse of a few years allowed each event to assume its proper significance in the minds of the apostles; whereas, at the moment of its utterance, each word of Him who "spake as never man spake" would seem to demand a record, and each action as it was done. But what we have now is such a collection of memoirs as enables us, without having every word of Jesus registered and every deed chronicled, to see the spirit of all that He did; and his life is such that, when we come elsewhere on a saying which must apparently be attributed to Him, like this of the Talmud—"A son and a daughter shall inherit alike"—though we have not the words in a Gospel, we can feel that they are such words as might have been uttered by the Jesus whose history our Gospels record. The Gospels teach us the spirit of Christ, and the spirit of Christ is Christianity.

J. RAWSON LUMBY.

BRIEF NOTICES.

CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY GOSPELS. Vol. I. St. Matthew and St. Mark. *By G. Constantinos.* This Commentary, which is written in modern Greek and published at Athens, is interesting as shewing the position of New Testament studies in the most flourishing centre of learning in the Greek Church. It is interesting, too, especially for Englishmen, as bearing considerable traces of the influence of English scholarship. The writers most prominently quoted seem to be Alford and Wordsworth, and it is possibly something more than a coincidence that the German writers whose names are mentioned have all had their works translated into English. By the side of these modern writers the other most important element in the Commentary is that which is supplied by the Greek Fathers, Chrysostom, the Gregories, Theo-

phylact, and Euthymius Zigabenus. The quotations are generally well selected, and have the merit of being not too long. The same merit attaches to the Commentary as a whole, which certainly makes good its claims to be considered "practical." With no very profound thought or profound learning, and in some respects with a regrettable amount of inaccuracy, it is yet always clear, readable, and intelligent—if at times, as it seems to us, somewhat naïve. The work has suffered rather from its slightness. Thus a chronological table is given, but nothing is said as to the grounds on which the chronology is based. Not that there would have been much reason to complain of this, if it had been hinted that other chronological systems were possible. As it is, we have stated with dogmatic positiveness a system which is improbable in itself and opposed to the best authorities. Another portion of the work that is especially faulty is that which relates to the Greek text of the Gospels. We gather from the Preface that the text adopted is that of the Codex Alexandrinus, an unfortunate and unnecessary choice, considering that the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. were equally accessible. It does not appear what has been done for the first twenty-four chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, where the Alexandrine MS. is wanting. But on testing the correctness of the transcription in places where the MS. is available, there would seem to be really but little relation between it and the original. No less than six marked divergences appear in the first thirteen verses of St. Mark. We may say, in passing, that the Alexandrine MS. is antedated by nearly a century, the Memphitic Version and Old Latin postdated by as much. But no eccentricities in regard to the text will surprise us after reading the two following sentences. The closest examination of the 1,277 MSS. of the New Testament "discovered about 50,000 differences. All these, however, except fifty, are orthographical, and these fifty, all but ten or twelve, consist in transpositions of words. Of the remaining ten or twelve, two only relate to the Gospels, the rest to the Epistles, and these do not bear upon dogmatic teaching!" The theologians of Greece seem to need the lesson which is too much needed here in England—that so-called "popular" writing is no excuse for being inexact, that is, in point of fact, untruthful.

THE OXFORD BIBLE FOR TEACHERS. (University Press.) A few months ago we noticed, with warm but deserved commendation, "The Teacher's Bible," published by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. And now already another Bible for Teachers lies before us—another,

and yet well nigh the same. Nothing can be more beautiful and sumptuous than this Bible, regarded merely as a book. At least in the small quarto form in which we possess it, it is a model of the printer's art and of the bookbinder's. It is a pleasure to look at it, and a still greater pleasure to handle it. But, after all, a book must be judged by its contents, and not by its external attractions. And, so far as contents are concerned, there seems at first hardly any difference between the Oxford and the London Bibles for Teachers. The resemblance between them, indeed, is somewhat suspiciously close, though possibly it admits of a very plain and easy explanation. Not only do they contain similar annotations, tables, lists, indexes, &c.; but in the Index of Subjects, and again in the Concordance, we find some insertions and some omissions common to them both, for which it is difficult to account. It is not easy, therefore, to choose between them. We are not aware which of the two was the first in the field, or we should be tempted to give the preference to that. But if we must choose, we give our vote for that of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode—mainly on this ground: that while their essays on the poetry, the music, the ethnology, the plants, the animals, the weights and coins of the Bible, are signed by such distinguished names as those of Mr. Cheyne, Dr. Stainer, Mr. Sayce, Sir J. Hooker, Canon Tristram, and Mr. Madden, the Oxford Bible guarantees its notes only by the dubious general assertion that they have been prepared or revised “by eminent Oxford scholars and professors.” Still the two are so nearly on a level, alike in their excellences and defects, that we would ask, Is there really any need for *two* Bibles for Teachers? It seems a waste of good work that two sets of scholars, whether eminent or not eminent, should be engaged in one and the same task; and that the teachers of our Sunday-schools, who have so little to guide their choice, should be compelled to choose between books almost equally good.

THE THREE WITNESSES. *By Stephen Jenner, M.A.* (London: Longmans.) In this little volume—dedicated to the Dean of Peterborough—Mr. Jenner applies the method of Paley, in the *Hore Pauline*, to the writings of Peter, James, and John, the three leading witnesses to the resurrection of our Lord. He sets himself to discover from the Gospel records the characteristic and distinguishing qualities of the apostles who were our Lord's closest personal friends. He then traces these same characteristic and individualizing qualities in the Epistles ascribed to them—in their references to special incidents in the life of Christ by which they were severally impressed, in

the forms which his teaching assumed in their several minds, in their peculiar idioms, their turns of thought and expression, in the very emphasis they lay on special words or facts. Having thus established the reality and trustworthiness of his witnesses, he cites and weighs their testimony to the Resurrection, and contends that it is worthy of all acceptance. The argument is conducted with much ingenuity and force. Mr. Jenner, indeed, is a solid rather than a brilliant writer, and from his style we should infer that he does not wield a practised pen; but he writes with plain sincerity, and suggests an argument which deserves more attention than it has yet received. Here and there, too, his assumptions are questionable. We doubt, for example, his identification of St. James, although it can plead the high authority and ingenious reasoning of Mr. Bassett. But his assumptions, as he himself points out, form no part of his real argument, and do not in any way detract from its force. To those who take an interest in Christian Apologetics, we can cordially commend this work as likely to be helpful to them, and suggestive.

THE LIFE OF OUR LORD, *by W. Ireland Gordon, M.A.* (Edinburgh: Blackwoods), is a compendium which not only those who conduct Bible-classes, but ministers and clergymen, will find very handy and useful. In a series of numbered sections, Mr. Gordon tells the story recorded in the four Gospels, mainly in the language of the Gospels themselves, piecing together their several details, noting their several variations, and adding to every variation or detail the name (within brackets) of the Evangelist whose authority he follows. At the close of each section he gives references to those passages in the Gospels on which the section is based. So that the student of any event in our Lord's history may embrace in a single glance all that the four Gospels record of it, and is enabled, if he wish to pursue the subject, to turn at once to the Chapters and Verses in which his materials are to be gathered. Many will find, as we have found already, that by using this small manual, they may save themselves much labour, and that many themes for consideration are started simply by seeing all that the Gospels say of any incident collected on a single page. The "Life" is preceded by a thoughtful essay on the characteristics of the Gospels and their authors—an essay the value of which is guaranteed by the approval of Dr. Sanday; and it is followed by "notes" so slight as to be rather a blot on what is otherwise a good and serviceable piece of work.

THE SOLILOQUY OF JOB.

FIRST MONOLOGUE. (CHAPTER XXVIII.)

THE links which connect Chapter xxvii. with Chapter xxviii. are not very obvious : on the contrary, they are so latent and subtle that many have looked for them in vain. But we must remember both that even our Western art does not *obtrude* the logical skeleton round which it weaves its breathing forms, that even with us Poetry is "a choice and condensed form of emotional speech;" and that in all Oriental forms of composition there is what seems to us a strange and studied abruptness. It is the special glory of Oriental art "to *conceal* a thing"—as it is the honour of a student or critic "to search out the matter;" and therefore we need not be surprised to find in an Oriental poem a certain difficulty in tracing the flow and sequence of thought. But the difficulty is not, I think, insuperable, or even very formidable, if only we approach it in the right direction, and bring to it not the narrow contracted vision of the bookworm and the pedant, but the open eyes that desire the truth and are familiar with the ways of men.

1. What is the subject which Job has been discussing with the Friends, and which he still continues to discuss now that they have withdrawn from the debate? It is that mysterious Providence which does not, as men often assume that it ought to do, deal out instant and patent retribution whether to the good or

the bad. Of the lot and doom of the wicked Job has just confessed that, in the Debate, he had taken an exaggerated view ; that, as a rule and in the end, they do receive the due reward of their deeds, although he had once questioned whether they did. But even so, he now adds, even when this admission is made, the mystery of Providence is not thereby solved. That mystery, indeed, is not solvable by man. Much as he can do, he cannot do this : to comprehend God, or the ways of God, is beyond him. Incapable of an intellectual solution of the problem, he must perforce be content with a moral solution of it ; as he cannot master or surprise the secrets of Wisdom, he must make it his wisdom to fear God and to eschew evil.

2. This is one, and a main, link of connection. And we have only to limit and specialize the general affirmation, "*Man* cannot solve the mystery of the Divine ways ;" we have only to conceive of Job as saying to the Friends, "*I* have not solved it, nor have *you*," to discover other and similar links. Conscious, perhaps, of some appearances of inconsistency between his former and his present descriptions of "the heritage of the wicked from the Almighty," Job explains, and in some sense justifies, the inconsistency by admitting that, when he has done his best to understand the ways of God with men, he cannot understand them ; that, while at times he can trace the action of the law of retribution in the lot and fate of men, at other times, in other instances, he cannot trace it : so that he has no alternative but to trust in the action of that law beyond the points to which he can trace it, to believe that it is best to do good and to eschew evil, though he cannot in all cases prove it to be best.

3. But if *he* has not solved "the insoluble riddle of the world," still less have the Friends solved it. And now that, freed from the excitements of controversy, he can look on the solution they have pressed upon him with larger and calmer eyes, he can also make allowance for their failure even while he rebukes their presumption. They had been grievously in error both in so lightly assuming that *they* could interpret and vindicate the ways of God, and in accusing Job of sins of which he was the last man to be guilty in order to vindicate God's way with him. "But, after all," he seems to say to them, "and wrong as you were in much, you were not wrong in motive. You simply attempted the impossible—simply attempted to explain what no man can explain, to justify what no man can justify. You have been wrong, and I have been wrong; we could not but be wrong so long as we set ourselves to solve the insoluble. Let us humble ourselves, and bow before the unfathomable wisdom of God, and take a law from his mouth."

4. And yet, while Job makes allowance for the Friends, and in some sort condemns himself, he also in some sort defends and vindicates himself. Neither he nor they were able to penetrate to the secrets of perfect and absolute Wisdom, or to comprehend the dealings of Him with whom alone Wisdom dwelt as in its native home. No man could do that. But man's nearest approach to it, his highest attainable wisdom, was to listen to Him with whom dwelt Wisdom itself, to love and reverence Him, and to prove the sincerity of that loving reverence by eschewing the evil which He condemns, however inviting or flourishing it may look for a time. Tacitly and modestly, but unmistak-

ably and firmly, Job professes that to *this* wisdom he has attained ; that he has been true to it ; that even when he has seen the wicked in great power and mirth he has still cried, " Far from *me* be the counsel of the wicked ;" that even when the Lord Himself seemed turned to be his foe, he had still held fast to " the fear of the Lord ;" that even when goodness seemed to be a mark for all the storms of heaven, he had still clung to it and " eschewed evil."

There are other, though minuter, threads of connection that might be traced out between the Chapters, but these surely are sufficient. If we take Job as confessing and asserting that the mystery of the Divine Providence is insoluble by man, that he himself has failed in his endeavours to solve it, that the Friends have still more conspicuously failed, but that none the less he has been true to the highest approximate solution of it which man can reach, we shall have no difficulty in seeing why he passes from describing " the doom of the wicked man from God," to elaborate the conclusion, " The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to eschew evil, that is understanding."

This conclusion is set forth with much wealth and pomp. The Poet seems to go out of his way to give us all that he knows of the miner's art, to work up all the details of it into one of the most charming and elaborate pictures in his richly-stored gallery. Nor is he content with this picture of the ancient miner and his art (Verses 1-11) ; he also works into the Chapter one or two of those simple literary feats in which the simplicity of the antique world delighted, and in which he himself excelled,¹ giving us, in Verses 15-19, both

¹ See Exposition of Chapter xv. Verse 10, with the Foot-note to it.

an inventory of the gems most prized in the East, and an assortment of most of the Hebrew words for "gold." No one of these artistic and literary feats may be actually requisite for conveying the Poet's thought, however they may serve to give weight and beauty to his thought. No doubt he lingers over them because he loves them; just as Homer describes at length the shield of Achilles, or Shakespeare the doublings of "poor Wat,"¹ and the unmatched beauty of Theseus' hounds,² because he delights in the work for its own sake. And yet who can wish that a picture so perfect in itself, and to us so instructive, should have been omitted or even curtailed? Who can deny that the long suspense in which our thought is held, while the description proceeds and before the conclusion is reached, lends weight to the conclusion when it comes, and so converts what looks like an artistic defect into an artistic merit and triumph?

Whence he drew the materials of his picture it is impossible to be sure. Even so early as his day mines were worked both in the Lebanon and Idumea; but, in all probability, it was from the Egyptian mines in the Sinaitic Peninsula that our Poet—whose familiar acquaintance with the life and customs of Egypt we have often remarked—gathered the knowledge here employed; for these mines—with their shafts, working apparatus, and smelting-places—are to be seen to this day in the very condition in which they were left by the Egyptian workmen four or five thousand years ago; the very marks of their tools being so fresh and sharp in that pure dry atmosphere, that more than one

¹ "Venus and Adonis," 680-708.

² "A Midsummer-Night's Dream," Act iv. Scene 1.

traveller has felt, while looking at them, as though the men had but knocked off work for a spell, and might come back to it at any moment.

The description extends from Verse 1 to Verse 11, and opens by simply announcing (*Verses* 1, 2) that men are capable of taking, and do take, silver and gold, iron and copper, from the earth. The statement is quite, and remarkably, accurate so far as it goes. Silver is, as a rule, found in a *vein*, an "issue," a mine; men have to dig for it: while the "place for gold" is on or near the surface of the earth; it is found imbedded in rocks carried down by ancient torrents, and needs to be *washed out* from the pulverized rock. The Hebrew language has a technical term for each of the processes of refining known to the ancients—washing and smelting: it is the former which is used of gold in Verse 1, and the latter which is used of copper in Verse 2. Diodorus (iii. 11 *et seq.*) gives a long description of the method of refining gold in use among the Egyptians. He tells us how, when the gold-bearing rock was crushed, they spread it on "a broad table slightly inclined," and poured water over it to wash away the earthy parts, repeating the operation several times, till only the finer particles of earth and dross were left, and then removing these by pressing a sponge lightly upon them, till nothing but gold remained on the slab. Thus, even then, men strained, or filtered, or "washed out," the gold from the dust and rubbish of the broken matrix.

Verse 3 shews that it is from the bowels of the earth that iron and copper were taken. For here the miner is represented as making an end of darkness by carrying light into the dark interior of the earth, and search-

ing, with candle and torch and lamp, for the precious ores buried in its cold and gloomy recesses. An unfortunate ambiguity in our Authorized Version has long led the unlearned to take the "he" of this and the following Verses as referring to a Divine nominative, and assume that it is *God* who makes an end of darkness, puts forth his hand against the rocks, overturns the mountains from their base, binds the floods, and brings that which is hidden to the light. The mistake was a natural one. But no scholar has ever doubted that the "he" of Verse 3 is *the man*, *i.e.*, the miner, implied in Verses 1 and 2, the man who finds the vein of silver, and washes out the gold, and takes iron from the earth, and smelts copper from the rock. For "*he* maketh an end of darkness," it is better, therefore, since it prevents so grave a misapprehension, to read, "*The miner* maketh an end of darkness."

In *Verse 4* we are told both how he gets into the dark interior of the earth, and how he carries himself when there. The *loneliness* of the miner's life, the dark and immense solitude which he invades, his remoteness from the common ways of men, seem to have deeply impressed the Poet's mind. It is "far from the habitations of men" that he sinks his shaft—amid the untrodden precipices of Sinai, for instance: even if he mine his way under a public road or within easy reach of the haunts of men, he is "forgotten of the foot," *i.e.*, those who walk over the very ground beneath which he toils are unaware of him: he "swings" down to his work, or perhaps sits swinging at his work, on a cross-bar slung between ropes, afar from the kindly homes of men and their kindly succour. There is the true poet's touch in this Verse: in a few deft strokes he

brings out *the pathos* of the miner's life and occupation—its peril, its loneliness, its remoteness even from those who stand nearest to it.

And there is another fine touch in *Verse 5*. The Poet, though he is carefully elaborating his picture, is not engrossed by it; his mind is large enough and enough at leisure to entertain any impressive generalization which his theme may suggest, even though it should seem remote from his immediate theme. And so, while he is telling us how the miner, blasting his way through the rocks,¹ stirs up the underpart of the earth as by fire, he remembers how much else, how much that is better and more precious, we owe the earth than iron and copper; he reminds us that the earth, which yields us valuable ores, also yields us the "bread" which is still more valuable and necessary to us; and thus he enhances the effect of his delineation of the swarthy solitary miner, carrying fire and havoc through the dark interior of the solid earth, by calling up a vision of the smiling harvests, steeped in sunlight, which wave and rustle upon the surface of the earth. Man is master of the world, without and within. Not content with compelling the soil around his habitation to serve him, to find him bread, he penetrates beneath the familiar surface of the earth to its dark hidden recesses, wringing from them their hoarded treasures, or wanders afar to discover the solitary haunts of gem and ore, snatching the sapphire from its bed among the rocks, and washing out the gold-dust from channels deserted by their ancient streams (*Verse 6*).

¹ That blasting was known and practised by the ancients, and that it was accompanied by many graphic incidents and effects such as we may see in our own quarries and mines, is certain from Pliny's (*H. N.* xxxiii. 4, 21) picturesque description.

Verses 7-10. Keen and wonderful as are the instincts of bird and beast, no hawk nor eagle is so quick to detect its prey as man to detect the gold or gems for which he searches; strong as are the lion and the tiger, no proudly-pacing beast rends its prey with the strength and force of man. *He* takes a path inaccessible, and even imperceptible, to them in his quest for every precious thing. With a might unknown to them, he "*puts forth his hand*" against the quartz" in which gold is imbedded—the phrase denoting the force and vigour of his assault—and blasts the very roots of the mountains bare. As he cuts "channels," or "canals," to carry off the water and drain the mine (*Verse 10*), so also (*Verse 11*) he binds up the waters that leak or trickle through the roof or walls of the galleries he has run through the earth, "so that they *weep* not." This picturesque phrase may have been a technical term among miners in ancient times, just as our colliers in the north of England name the action of the water that percolates through and into their workings *weeping*, and our navvies call the fine sand which percolates through the sides of a tunnel "*crying sand*."¹ The image is, indeed, so natural and obvious, that it may well have occurred to the "swart toilers" of the antique world.

From *Verse 12* we gather the motive of this elaborate description. The intelligence of man may, and does,

¹ For these technicalities I am indebted to the Rev. J. S. Simon, of Doncaster, who writes: "Perhaps it may interest you to know that this percolation of water into the workings of a mine is still called 'weeping' by our colliers in this neighbourhood, as I have ascertained from the manager of the Wombwell Main; and that a railway contractor informs me that one of the chief difficulties they have to contend against in making a tunnel arises from the percolating of a fine sand through the sides, which gradually fills up the working: its technical name is 'crying sand.'"

surpass the instinctive sagacity of bird and beast. He may, and does, search out every hidden and precious thing. Nothing can escape him, whether on the earth or in the earth, however distant it may be or whatever the darkness and the danger through which he must pass to reach it. But the haunt of Wisdom, the place of Understanding, is inaccessible even to his keen and sustained energy, undiscoverable even by his lofty and trained intelligence. Marvellous as his powers are, and marvellous as are his achievements, he cannot, by searching, find out *Wisdom*, *i.e.*, the true nature and causes of things; nor even acquire *Understanding*, *i.e.*, the power which discriminates, appreciates, and applies the large general principles of Wisdom to the demands and exigencies of the moment. To know the world as it is, to master the secret and ruling principles of the Divine Government and Providence, and to draw his thought and life into conformity with them—this is impossible to unaided man, great as he is, and though he be master and king of the world.

It is to lend weight to this weighty conclusion that the Poet has dwelt on what seemed to him among the most wonderful enterprises and achievements of man, on what was most penetrating, astonishing, successful in the various inquisitions of men, holding our minds in long suspense, that the sudden stroke which ends our suspense may impress us the more forcibly. It is as though he would say to us: "Much as man can do, and far as he can go in 'making an end of darkness,' there is one thing he cannot do, one darkness of which he cannot make an end. Although

In Nature's infinite book of secresy
A little he can read,

and even more than a little, Wisdom is beyond him, and Understanding. He cannot find them, nor dispel the darkness which veils them from his eyes; he cannot grasp the absolute; he can neither master the hidden principles of human life and duty, nor apply them to the various lots and conditions of men."

This thesis he proceeds to develop in some of his noblest yet simplest Verses. As Wisdom is everywhere at work, obviously it can be limited to no single "place," can have no single and specific haunt. As it is the chief good, we have nothing, or nothing adequate, that we can give in exchange for it. If a man were to search for it wherever life is found, traversing the habitable globe, sailing over the sea, plunging into the "abyss" of the ocean till he touched the subterranean springs which feed the ocean, in none of these would he find the place where Wisdom holds her seat. So far we are carried by the plain affirmation of *Verse* 13, and the fine impersonation of *Verse* 14. And in *Verses* 15-19 it is still further argued that, as "if a man would give all the substance of his house for Love, it would be utterly contemned," so Wisdom is in its very nature unpurchasable, that it cannot be bought for all the treasures discovered by the miner or transported by the merchant from Cush and "farthest Ind;" not for gems and jewels, though these are a passion in the East, nor for gold, however choice or choicely wrought. Detailed exposition of these Verses is impossible, for we are no longer able, as even the experts confess, to identify the precious stones catalogued by the Poet with any certainty. But we may remark that, as in Chapter iv. Verses 10 and 11, he gives us most of the Hebrew words for "lion," so in

these Verses he gives us four out of the seven Hebrew words for "gold," the original substantives having delicate distinctions of sense, which in translating we are obliged to indicate by adding such inadequate adjectives to gold as "fine," "pure," "bright."

We may also remark that by the stress and iteration here laid on wealth as the most mentionable equivalent for "Wisdom," we can hardly fail to be reminded that most men, most rich men at least, do assume a certain connection between wisdom and wealth. The rich man commonly supposes that he derives from his opulence some claim to advise, or control, or "represent" his neighbours; and too often the poor man, being himself greedy of wealth, trusts and admires, if he does not also envy, the man who has achieved it. Both the man of wealth, indeed, and the man of science, are somewhat too apt to arrogate wisdom to themselves, to speak as if their trained and practical sagacity gave them a right to speak with authority on themes which lie beyond their several spheres of thought and action. Job refuses to admit the claim of either. In the first section of this Chapter (Verses 1-12) he argues that a man may have all the faculties for mastering and interpreting the secrets of Nature, and yet be wholly destitute of the true Wisdom, destitute even of the faculty and methods by which alone it can be reached. And in the second section (Verses 13-21) he argues that, though a man should amass all that men hold most precious, and should be willing to barter all his "gold" for Wisdom, yet Wisdom is not to be had on these terms. If it is not to be found by searching, still less is it to be bought for money.

And yet, by the very emphasis he lays on the fact

that Wisdom is not to be "gotten" either by way of discovery or by way of purchase, he inspires us with the hope that there *is* a way by which even this divine treasure may be attained; that he does not intend to leave us without any answer to the question raised in *Verse* 12, and repeated in *Verses* 20 and 21. If not by the quest of the inquisitive intellect, nor yet by the gold of arrogant wealth, may not Wisdom come to man by the gift and revelation of God? Yes, replies the Poet; it may come *thus*, but *only* thus. Hidden from the eyes of all living, however keen and piercing they may be; hidden even from "the fowl of heaven," to whom the Eastern mind ascribed a supreme gift of divination, so that what is hidden from them is hidden indeed (*Verse* 21); so deeply hidden that *Death*, which unlocks so many secrets, and *Abaddon*, the unfathomed under-world into which men sink at death, and in which so much becomes plain to them, can only repeat the dubious "rumour" of it which they have heard; so deeply hidden that she is to be found neither in the seen nor the unseen world, there is One who knows it altogether (*Verses* 22 and 23); and He, whose gaze embraces all that is, and is done, on earth and under heaven—He alone can teach men Wisdom. He *has* taught it, so far as they are capable of receiving it. It was by wisdom that He made the world, determining the force of the wind, and the bounds of the sea, and the law of the rain, and even of the lawless-seeming tempest (*Verses* 24-26, with which compare Proverbs viii. 22-30). *Then*, when He created the heavens and the earth, Wisdom, which had dwelt with God, and had been his delight before it became creatively active, which had been "possessed by him from

the times before the earth was," became, as it were, objective, so that He "beheld" it; and not only beheld, but "declared" it, by embodying it in all the works of his hands; and not only declared, but "tested" it, by setting its demiurgic powers in motion, and marking what they could do (*Verse 27*). But if *men* have succeeded in gathering up and interpreting the wisdom embodied and declared in this natural revelation, *man* has not; the race, as a whole, has failed to derive from it an ethical law and training, a support and consolation under the changes and sorrows and wrongs of time. God must be his own interpreter, if his wisdom is to be made plain to man; for there is much in Nature, much in Providence, much that is most vital and essential, which man cannot explain and justify, or even understand. God *has* been his own interpreter. To man He has said, and said from "the beginning,"

Lo, the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom,
And to eschew evil, that is Understanding.

"Not in keen insight, or wide experience, or in the learning of the schools," humane or scientific, is man's true wisdom to be found, but in reverence and awe. "The fear of the finite in the presence of the Infinite, of the sinful in the presence of the Holy," the trust of the ignorant and feeble in the All-wise and the Almighty, *this* is the temper to which the true Wisdom comes.¹ Absolute Wisdom—to know things as they are in themselves and in their originating and final causes—is beyond the reach of man as yet; but a reverent trust in God as always good, and as ordering all things for our good, this is man's highest wisdom

¹ See Professor Plumptre on Proverbs viii. in "The Speaker's Commentary," vol. iv.

for the present, the relative wisdom by which he connects and associates himself with the absolute wisdom of the Almighty Ruler of men. And if this "fear of the Lord"—which is only another name for reverent love, the love kindled by Perfect Goodness, tempered by the awe due to the infinite Inhabitant of Eternity—if this be our Wisdom, our Understanding—since Understanding is that faculty which applies Wisdom to conduct and duty—is to eschew evil, to avoid and renounce all that God in our conscience, or by the common sense of the human race, or by some clearer revelation of his will, has condemned as wrong, injurious, base.

So that to reverence God, to fear and trust Him even when we can neither interpret nor vindicate his ways, is Wisdom : and this Wisdom shews itself practically in our hatred and recoil from evil. This, I apprehend, is what Solomon meant when, condensing and abbreviating even Job's brief and weighty conclusion, he affirmed, "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*" (Prov. viii. 13). And in Solomon's form, if not in Job's, this conclusion, somewhat variously expressed, would be accepted, I suppose, even by the most sceptical of men. For they admit, with Job, that man, infinite as he is in faculty, and capable of searching into the profoundest mysteries of Nature, is incapable of discovering what lies behind them—the Eternal Substance, or Force, or Will, of which all phenomena are but a various and passing show. But they scruple, and scruple on the very ground of this incapacity, to admit that all these phenomena declare *God*, or that to fear God is the sum and crown of human wisdom. Happily, however, they would be as forward as Solo-

mon himself to avow that the moral outcome of all Wisdom, its practical bearing on human conduct, if at least it may be stated on its negative side, is that we eschew evil. To them, as to us, the final dictate of wisdom is, Hate that which is evil, and its positive correlate, Follow after that which is good. And as we have Scripture for it that to hate evil is to fear the Lord, we may claim even those who as yet can see nothing beyond phenomena and the forces which produce them as among those who fear God, although they fear Him unconsciously or question his very existence : we may even affirm that, practically, they too concur in the conclusion with which Job brings his First Monologue to an end.

I cannot but be aware that, according to this interpretation of it, the Chapter must seem, to many minds, strangely modern and philosophical in its tone. It is impossible to vindicate the interpretation, however, without entering into a study of the treatment of "Wisdom" throughout the whole *Chokmah* literature of the Old Testament, which would be too serious a digression for this brief Commentary—such a study and disquisition as I hope we may soon receive from the pen of Professor Davidson.¹ Meantime, before any reader of these pages condemns the interpretation as too modern, let him at least remember that, on moral

¹ I give only one example of the modern form and tone of thought to be found in the treatment of "Wisdom" in these ancient Scriptures. The writer of the so-called Wisdom of Solomon (Chap. vii. 26, 27) has this fine passage :—

"She is the brightness of the everlasting Light,
The unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness :
And, being but one, she can do all things ;
And, remaining in herself, she maketh all things new ;—
And, in all ages, entering into holy souls,
She maketh them friends of God and prophets."

and philosophical themes, the profoundest thoughts, and even the final conclusions of the wise of all ages, and—so far as my reading extends—of all races, do resemble each other in the strangest way, and by virtue of the constitution and limits of the human mind *must* resemble each other: their quest is the same, and their conclusion the same, however various its form.

S. COX.

A WORD STUDY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

PART I.

LANGUAGE, it has been said, is buried history; and he that will dig diligently through the strata which the lapse of ages has piled one above another, will discover, with surpassing interest and surprise, how much words can teach him of the gradual elevation of man. Among other relics of the past, here and there especially will some fossil word make him linger to look upon the upheaval—if one be granted the metaphor—of heathen thought, word, and work, by the religion of Jehovah and the mission of Him who came to mould the race anew. One of such fossil words is *μακάριος* ("blessed")—a stone which is in itself a sermon, the brief but eloquent story of the redemption of mankind.

For what did the word convey to the older Greeks? Derived most probably from a root implying "greatness," it appears to have been first applied to him with whom, from his superior power, outward things were free from trouble. The idea of the *outward* crops up in the poetry of Euripides. In his play of the *Bacchants* (line 909) the chorus is made to chant, "Him

call I blessed (*μακαρίζω*) whose life hath good luck day by day and all the day long." Where then was the man to whom the name could be truly given? The Greek poets—the spokesmen of the national thought and yearning—looked not for him, knowing well that they would not find him. They called men *blessed*, it is true; but their use of the word was, of necessity, relative: the blessedness of their blest men could at any time be rudely overthrown. Homer could hold Agamemnon "blest" for "being born to high estate and prosperous days,"¹ but not blest amid his fitful fortunes and in his tragic end. Pindar could hail Carrhotus as "blest"² for his chariot triumph in the plains of Pytho; but in the same breath he sounds the warning note that "none is, or ever shall be, without a share of troubles." Euripides can speak of Tantalus³ as once "blest"—in his might as a king and in the honour paid him at the table of the gods—yet blest no longer, "ever trembling at the threatening rock towering high above his head." And the uncertainty of blessedness led the poets everywhere sorrowfully to confess that, since the living could not attain sure and perfect exemption from adversity, the dead alone could truly and safely be described as *μάκαρες* or *μακάριοι*; and that, at any rate, no mortal man had fairly earned the title till a blessed death had set its seal upon a blessed life. Maxims to this effect had been, it is believed, the inheritance of the Hellenic race from the earliest times. One of these Herodotus makes the theme of Solon's reply to Cræsus when that possessor of fabulous wealth was eager to be pronounced the happiest of men.

¹ Homer, *Iliad*, iii. 182.

² Pindar, *Pythian Odes*, v. 43-50.

³ Euripides, *Orestes*, 4.

"Man," the sage declared, "is altogether the sport of fortune, for the deity is jealous [of human prosperity], and delights in confusion. We must look, therefore, to the conclusion of everything, and call no man truly happy until, having constantly enjoyed the greatest number of blessings life can give, he has likewise come to a tranquil end."¹ Sophocles, in the opening words of his "Maidens of Trachis," puts the same gnome into the mouth of Dejanira:—

'Tis an old saying, told of many men,
 "Thou canst not judge man's life before he die,
 Nor whether it be good or bad for him."

And again, in "Œdipus the King," the chorus chants this mournful song:—

Oh, race of mortal men !
 I number you, and deem
 That ye, although ye live,
 Are but an empty dream.
 What man—yea, what, knows more
 Of happiness and peace
 Than just the idle show
 And then the sure decrease ?
 Thy fate, as pattern given,
 O Œdipus, my king !
 Thy doom, yea, thine, I say,
 I know of none I count as truly prospering.²

It was in the same spirit that Hesiod made mention of "the blessed spirits of men *in the abode of the dead*," and assigned to the heroes and deified ones the μακάρων νῆσοι ("isles of the blest"), as a place of rest for ever.

But if the spirits of the dead were free from toil and trouble, this bliss could be even more suitably ascribed to the gods themselves. And so we need not wonder

¹ The substance of Herodotus i. 32.

² Μακάριζω. Both these extracts are from Dr. Plumptre's "Translation of Sophocles" (second edition).

to find Homer opposing the θεοὶ μάκαρες ("blessed gods") to the θνητοὶ ἄνθρωποι ("mortal men"),—blessed gods, with Zeus, "the king of kings, most blessed of the blest,"¹ living far removed from all human vexation and suffering, the envy of the Lotos-eaters, in that "most musical, most melancholy," poem of the Laureate's:—

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world :
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.

Such, then, was μακάριος in the common Hellenic opinion. The typical Greek regarded "blessedness" rather from the outward than from the inward point of view ; the cloud of accidents hid the essence from his sight. And yet not altogether ; for to the poetic and national view there was a certain religious background which served as a prophecy of deeper thought and more accurate analysis. The sphere of happiness or blessedness was, it is true, outward and earthly ; but when this happiness was destroyed, what was assigned as the cause of its ruin ? Presumption, it was felt, could hardly be held back from following in the wake of prosperity ; and the divine order set its face against all insubordination and haughtiness of men, visiting every transgression of its laws with certain, though not always immediate, punishment. They that waxed prosperous seemed there and then to stand in slippery places, exposed by their very prosperity to the φθόνος

¹ Æschylus, *Suppliants*, 519—ἄναξ ἀνάκτων, μακάρων μακάρατε.

("envy") of the jealous gods. When Amasis, King of Egypt, heard, as Herodotus tells us, of the growing power and magnificence of Polycrates, King of Samos, he sent to his relative a message which began with these words: "Thus saith Amasis to Polycrates, Sweet is it to hear of the health and wealth of a friend and ally; but I like not thy great good fortune, mindful as I am that the deity is envious. . . . For I know not that I ever heard of any man who was fortunate in all things and did not at last utterly perish."¹ Œdipus, after his victory over the Sphinx, rose to the throne of Thebes, and, being lifted up by his success, described himself as the man

Whom all name Œdipus the Great.²

He had likewise broken, though unwittingly, the unchangeable laws of kith and kin. Therefore did the "Envy" of the gods lie in wait for his haughtiness, and, conspiring with the Nemesis that avenged his special transgression, compassed his disastrous fall.

In a word, continued prosperity went hand in hand with natural piety. No wonder then that *εὐδαίμων* was a constant synonym for *μακάριος*. The man whom prosperity did not exalt above dependence upon the gods, and who transgressed not the "eternal sanctities" of natural law, had a "good deity" or "good genius" always attending him. This conjunction of outward prosperity with reverence of spirit and conformity to heaven's decrees, furnishes a connecting link with the idea of inwardness which usually pervaded the more analytical definitions of Greek philosophy when it discussed the conditions of happiness. Happiness, it

¹ Herodotus, iii. 40.

² Sophocles, *Œdipus the King*, line 7.

seemed to the philosophers, ought to dwell in some strong tower which could repel "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;" and the various schools sought in various ways for a shelter from the "changes and chances of this mortal life." It may be well briefly to review the conceptions of happiness held by the most conspicuous of these schools, and expounded by their founders or representatives.

Our starting point is naturally Socrates. He, as Cicero tells us,¹ "was the first to call philosophy down from the heavens to the earth," the first to turn it aside from the barren cosmical and physical speculation of his predecessors to an honest "inquiry concerning life and morals and things good and evil," which was involved in his primary maxim, "Know thyself." Accepting the fact that *εὐδαιμονία* ("happiness") was the highest aim of mankind, he defined it in the widest sense as not merely "luck" and "feeling," but "well-being"² generally, and made it synonymous, not with *εὐτυχία*, "good fortune," but with *εὐπραξία*, "good doing,"³ asserting, moreover, that the aim was to be attained, not in outward good, but in such good as came by moral excellence. Happiness was in this way raised from the lower level of *external prosperity* to the higher level of *internal morality*. In one passage he endorses the fable once told by Prodicus of the choice of Hercules, when Virtue represented to the hero that by following her he would attain *τὴν μακαριστοτάτην εὐδαιμονίαν*, "the most blessed happiness."⁴ And what, in his opinion, this happiness was, may be gathered

¹ *Tusculan Disputations*, v. 4.

² It is in this more accurate sense that "happiness" (the most available English word) is used throughout the present article.

³ Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, iii. 9, 14.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii. 1.

from his remark to Antipho, that the greatest pleasure came, not from success in endeavour, but from the consciousness of "growing better oneself, and making one's friends better likewise"—that *εὐδαιμονία* accordingly lay not in luxury and extravagance. "But," he adds, "to my thinking, it is divine to want nothing; and to want as little as may be is nearest to the divine: and I hold the divine to be perfection, and that to be nearest the divine is to be nearest perfection."¹ The latter of these passages serves as a comment upon the former. *Μακάριος* and *εὐδαίμων* (generally translated, and with fair accuracy, "blessed" and "happy" respectively), though frequently used without apparent distinction, exhibit at other times a real difference. *Εὐδαίμων* ("having a good genius"), as can be easily seen, is applicable, not to the gods, but only, properly speaking, to men: it is therefore employed, when such distinction is required, to denote such a "well-being" as is possible for mortals, while *μακάριος* describes the "blessedness" belonging peculiarly to the divine existence.² *Εὐδαιμονία* is therefore the natural word of the philosophers in dealing with ethics, and appears strictly to signify the essence without the adjuncts, while *μακάριος* implies the essence and the adjuncts too. Take, for example, the expression of Aristotle in the section last quoted. "The happy man (*εὐδαίμων*) will never become miserable, yet will not be blessed (*μακάριος*), if he fall into the misfortunes of Priam." Thus the *εὐδαιμονία* ("well-being") of mortal life may rise to *μακαριότης* ("blessedness") in proportion as the hindrances are taken away, and the internal embodies

¹ Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, vi. 9, 10.

² Comp. Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, i. 9, 34 (Cope's note), and *Ethics* i. 10-14 (Jelf's notes).

itself in external realization, as in the case of the gods. That "most blessed happiness," therefore, which Virtue offered to Hercules as the sure accompaniment and reward of honourable action, was synonymous with that "true happiness" which Socrates declared to consist in being "nearest the divine perfection."

But how was the *εὐδαιμονία* to be obtained? This question brings us face to face with the fundamental idea of the Socratic ethics, that virtue—practical moral excellence—was the necessary result of knowledge or theoretical insight; that, conversely, wickedness sprang solely from ignorance; and that those who could discern the honourable and the good would never prefer any other course of conduct.¹ Virtue, that uniform and durable quality of the soul, working the highest good, and therefore the essential condition of that happiness or well-being which was the end and aim of all that was good, beautiful, and useful—this virtue, he appears to have thought, could be taught like mathematics. We need not be surprised then that Socrates, regarding knowledge so exclusively as the only path to moral excellence, at times actually identified the one with the other, making knowledge the equivalent of virtue and of similitude to the gods.² And it will help us more exactly to appreciate the position of Socrates if we remember that he was the embodiment of a reaction, a reaction of the *Zeitgeist* which possessed the land in the days of the Sophists. They also had directed their attention to the moral nature of man, but had taken their stand, not on exact verified knowledge, but on current popular opinion. The hollowness and

¹ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, iii. 9, 5. Confirmed by Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, vi. 13, and *Ethics of Eudemus*, i. 5.

² Comp. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, iii. 9, 4, iv. 5, 11, and i. 6, 10.

utter inutility of such conventional orthodoxy, in its ignorance and assumption, Socrates scouted and exposed; and, with a vivid perception of its mischievous results, he not unnaturally took up his standpoint at the other extreme, affirming that, while in the hands of mere opinion morality and well-being were imperilled, in those of knowledge they were absolutely secure. So complete, moreover, was his power of self-control, that he appears to have had no clear conception of a knowledge not rooted in the life, of "him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not."¹

Socrates was eminently practical. He "knew nothing that was good unless it were good for something;"² and *εὐπραγία* ("good doing") was to him the goal of man's endeavour. But Plato built upon his master's simple thesis an abstract and complex edifice of transcendentalism. With Plato, indeed, as with Socrates, "well-being" depended not upon outward things,³ but upon the possession of moral beauty and goodness. In the *Gorgias* (470 E), he makes Socrates say to Polus, "The man or woman that is gentle (or 'fair') and good, I say is happy; but he that is unjust and evil is miserable." In the *Symposium* (202 C), it is said that "the happy are those who are the possessors of things good and fair." And again (205 E): "By the possession of what is good are the happy happy (*εὐδαίμονες*)." Virtue was the fitness of the human soul for its proper task;⁴ virtue was the soul's health, and vice the soul's disease; and a virtuous life far exceeded any other in its benefits to the possessor, as ensuring that regularity of imagination, that tranquillity and in-

¹ James iv. 17.² Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, iv. 6, 3.³ Comp. *Republic*, x. 613 A.⁴ Ibid. 353, 444.

ternal harmony, which was the soul's proper happiness.¹ And in the fourth book of the *Law*, he says, "One who is blessed with virtuous habits passes a life more happy than one under opposite circumstances in every particular whatsoever." With Plato again, as with Socrates,² perfection, and therefore perfect happiness, was attained in proportion as the divine was, by wisdom or knowledge, approached most closely; for the ethical end of man was ὁμοιώσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν³ ("resemblance to God as far as possible"). But here Plato left Socrates behind, and, soaring in theoretical speculation far above and beyond matter, space, time, and even being, he conceived of an Absolute Good, the Idea of the Universal Good, existing *per se*, and not in any individual object, and to which every actuality remained perpetually inferior. In the *Republic* (vi. 505 A) he asserts (of course, as always, through the Platonic Socrates) that the "essential Form of Good is the highest object of science;" and again (509 B): "The good, far from being identical with real existence, actually transcends it in dignity and power." From the identification of this "Idea" with the Divine Reason (τὸν ἀληθινὸν καὶ θεῖον νοῦν—*Philebus*, 22 C) and with the δημιουργός ("world-builder," *Timæus*, 28)—the absolutely good, working himself out in generated things—we conclude that it was Plato's Supreme Deity.⁴ It is this Idea, then, that, as "God," he holds up, in the *Theætetus* and elsewhere, for imitation; and the *highest* happiness fell to the lot of those alone who by knowledge (σοφία, φρόνησις, ἐπιστήμη) attained the power

¹ Albinus' *Introduction to Opinions of Plato*, chap. xxvii.

² Comp. as before, *Memorabilia*, i. 6, 10.

³ *Theætetus*, 176 B.

⁴ Comp. Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 122—a book to which the writer would here make a general acknowledgment.

of taking flight¹ (φύγη) from the inevitable evil of the imperfect phenomenal, and finding their fullest satisfaction in a pure intellectual contemplation which culminated in the cognition of the Ideal Good.² Plato's σοφία ("wisdom") accordingly takes precedence of Socrates' εὐπραξία ("good doing"); the intellectual rises higher than the practical; and transcendental ascetic mysticism is the only effectual counterpoise to the iron necessity of evil which weighs down mankind.

Aristotle was an observer of facts, and, unlike Plato, kept, for ethical purposes, near the ground. "We must start," said he, "from the things that are known."³ Following this rule, he, broadly speaking, discarded from the province of ethics the immortal, the divine, and the ideal, and restricted it to the empirical definition of the highest practical good attainable by man as an active social being.⁴ This highest practical good he held to be well-being, or happiness,⁵ and to be the result of the performance by each man of his special work⁶—the effect of the virtuous activity of the soul under the guidance of reason (ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον, and also κατ' ἀρετήν), and having pleasure as its complement.⁷ He defines virtue (i.e., the proficiency in willing what is conformed to reason) to be "a habitude" (i.e., a developed potentiality), "by which a man becomes good, and by which he will discharge well his own work."⁸ In this way the will was distinguished from the intellect, and virtue made to consist in a formed state of the will rather than in a wise insight; and "well-being" was involved in the development of the highest tendency in man's nature, the joy in the

¹ *Theætetus*, 176 A.² *Republic*, 519.³ *Nicomachean Ethics*, i. 2.⁴ *Ibid.* i. 4.⁵ *Ibid.* i. 2, 7.⁶ *Ibid.* i. 6.⁷ *Ibid.* x. 4.⁸ *Ibid.* ii. 5.

doing of the good contributing the complement of pleasure.

Yet while Aristotle confined ethics to the social and human sphere, he did not shut the divine out of view: he only considered human morality something not to be predicated of the gods,¹ who occupied a plane so much higher as to be essentially different for all ethical ends. The gods, in his opinion, had no scope for the exercise of the moral virtues, and consequently could find their blessedness only in contemplation—that is to say, in the energy of the pure intellect.² Man, on the other hand, so far as he is man and a compound being, will find his happiness in the moral virtues; but, so far as he is divine, in the intellectual. “For the life in obedience to the intellect will be divine in comparison with human life.”³ And “the energy of the Deity, as it surpasses all others in blessedness, must be contemplative; and therefore, of human energies, that which is nearest to this must be the happiest.”⁴ The most perfect happiness, therefore, must be outside the ethical sphere; and on this necessity was founded Aristotle’s distinction between the inferior ethical or practical virtues, and the superior dianoetic virtues, or developed activities of the pure reason (*διανοία*).⁵ And as the reason is the best part of man, “each man’s self,” “the ruling and the better part,” so “should he do everything with a view to living in accordance with it;” by which means, the pure intellect being the link with the divine, he would be “striving to make himself immortal,” and therefore to attain the most perfect bliss. With Aristotle, then, the happiness of the in-

¹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, x. 8.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* x. 7, 11.

⁴ *Ibid.* x. 8, 11.

⁵ *Ibid.* i. 13.

tellest is something separate, and the intellectual life, rather than the moral, gives scope for "well-being" in the highest sense.

The Stoics refused to regard happiness, or its complement, pleasure, as in any way an end, but represented *εὐδαιμονία* as the natural result (*ἐπιγένημα*) of virtue ("Pleasure," said Seneca, "is the companion, not the guide, of our course"): while virtue was defined to be *τὸ ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν* ("living in conformity with nature"), "which," said Zeno, "was to live according to virtue; for nature is our guide to this."¹ The Pantheistic basis of the Stoic ethics naturally affected their conception of happiness. Zeus was the "soul of the universe:" the human soul was an *ἐπίσπασμα τοῦ θεοῦ*—"a part severed from the divine." Hence their definition of virtue ran, at full length, as follows: "The virtue of the happy man, and the smooth flow of his life" (*εὐροία βίου*, equivalent to *εὐδαιμονία*),² "consists in a course of action exhibiting the harmony of the divinity (*δαίμων*) in each individual with the design of the Controller of the universe."³ But this "Controller" possessed no real personality; he was the "consciousness of the universe," its "creating and working force," at once Fate and Providence, from whom all transitory personality came, and to whom it would in due time return. Under this impersonal unbending necessity evil found its place, not as in itself a good, but as "not unuseful." So Plutarch quotes Chrysippus: "Evil in some way becomes consistent with nature, and, so to speak, is found useful to the universe, for otherwise good would not be useful." And again:

¹ Diogenes Laertius, Book vii. *Zeno*, chap. liii.

² Stobæus, *Eclogæ*, ii.

³ Diogenes Laertius, Book vii. *Zeno*, chap. liii.

"It is not possible to take away evil altogether, nor is it well that it should be taken." And such was the general opinion of the Stoics, though Cleanthes, in his "Hymn to Zeus," appears to modify it into the conviction that "evil is overruled for good, and made to harmonize with the plan of the universe." It will be observed that in the theory we have described there is no presupposition of morality; nor is the law which harmonizes the "All" anywhere clearly asserted to be subordinate to the moral. In fact, if we may accept the statement of Origen,¹ the Stoics held "no act, as such, to be either praiseworthy or disgraceful; and even those acts that were most criminal they held to be good when done with a good intention." The original vital instinct tended, they thought, neither to morality nor to happiness, but to self-conservation (ἡ αὐτοῦ σύστασις)²—an end secured only by the highest of human faculties, the reason, which led to virtue as the true means of living in harmony with the all-controlling law. Seeing, then, that the intellect is the highest faculty, obedience to the intellect is man's highest duty;³ and virtue attained by contemplation, not pure contemplation *per se*, contains within itself the highest happiness. But virtue was by Zeno made equivalent to φρόνησις ("practical wisdom")—alone sufficient for happiness, because it rendered men superior to pain; and the Stoical idea of happiness was, after all, little if anything more than the absence of pain,⁴ that is to say, the absence of all emotion; for emotion seemed to them to be neither natural nor useful, but to

¹ *Contra Celsum*, iv. 45.

² Diogenes Laertius, vii. *Chrysippus*, 85.

³ Plutarch, *De Repug. Stoic.* ii.

⁴ *Ibid.*

result from the overbalancing of the practical judgment.¹ The "wise man," or "sage" (a being whom the Stoics had to confess was, in the true sense, "past finding out"), could claim equality with Zeus in all things essential. Zeus and he were equally profitable to one another. But even the "sage" found at times the limits of his power in his contest with evil; and therefore, since life was a "non-essential," as soon as he discovered that—like the Stoic's pattern, Cato, after the ruin of the Roman Republic—he could no longer make headway, and live honourably, he was allowed to turn his back upon the enemy, and bring his life to an end by the *εὐλογος ἐξαγωγή* ("the rational exit from existence"), alike the climax of his self-government (*ἀνευπύθυνος ἀρχή*) and the termination of his happiness.

Epicureanism (to which we may give a passing word) could, strange as it might appear, claim a close kinship with Stoicism. Epicureanism, it is true, made pleasure its aim. ("We say that pleasure is the beginning and end of happy living.")² Nay, further: it maintained that there were no pleasures which had not a sensuous origin. But the "pleasure" of Epicurus consisted not in a positive, but in a negative—in an absence of pain or disturbance (*μήτε ἀλγῶμεν μήτε ταρβῶμεν*), and that in the mind rather than in the body, "since the soul suffers from that which is past and present and to come."³ All pleasure was good, and all pain evil; but before accepting a given pleasure, or rejecting a given pain, the consequences must be weighed (*συμμέτρησης*), and the keenest foresight was his who discerned

¹ Seneca, *Ep.* ix.; Plutarch, *De Refug. Stoic.* ii.

² Diogenes Laertius, x. 128.

³ *Ibid.* x. 137.

that virtues and pleasure grew inseparably together.¹ "It is impossible," said Epicurus, "to live agreeably without living prudently, decently, and uprightly; nor prudently, decently, and uprightly, without living agreeably."² Insight and calculation enabled the "sage to be happy even in the bull of Phalaris:" he had only to be free from the mental pains of remorse and superstition, and fully to realize the natural limits of life. The Epicurean ἀταραξία ("absence of disturbance") and the Stoic ἀπθεια ("absence of emotion") met like extremes: the Stoic, spurning happiness as an end, and making for wisdom as the means to his highest good—"harmony with universal law"—and accepting the good things obtained by wisdom and harmony only as adjuncts, and the Epicurean aiming at the Stoic's adjuncts by way of the Stoic's highest good, both alike were bent on eliminating the mutabilities of human existence.

Cynicism exaggerated independence, and sought happiness in sardonic indifference; and, as to the Hedonists, who searched for it in the pleasures of sensation (the enjoyment and control of which were to the "sage" the only advantage of intellectual culture), they can hardly be reckoned as at all typical of Greek philosophic thought.

JOHN MASSIE.

¹ Comp. Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, p. 210.

² Diogenes Laertius, x. 132.

*THE NINETIETH PSALM RECONCILED WITH
CHRISTIAN OPTIMISM.*

THE first impression made on one's mind by the reading of this Psalm is very depressing. Over the whole of it there seems to rest the dark shadow of a despairing pessimism. Specially sombre appears the aspect presented to our view by that contrast between the everlasting life of God and the brief life of men: "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (Verse 4); "The days of *our* years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Verse 10). The Psalmist seems in the mood to indulge in melancholy reflections on the shortness of man's days. He accumulates figures of speech to make the fact as impressive as possible; comparing human life now to a swift river, now to a sleep, now to the grass which groweth up and flourisheth in the morning, and in the evening is cut down and withered. And the reference to the everlasting life of God seems intended to deepen the sense of transitoriness, by dwarfing the short period of our life on earth into utter nothingness; as if the purpose were to overwhelm us with depression, and breed in us such thoughts as the pessimist delights in:—What is the value of joys that must so soon come to an end? What the use of labour that is so soon to be interrupted? Life is what the worshippers of Brahma call *Maya*, delusion, mere seeming. Gladness and sadness, activity and passion, are all alike futile: let us resign ourselves to an apathy which is the nearest approach to the extinction of conscious existence.

The contrast expressed in the two Verses above quoted easily might be, and often has been, employed to justify such a sombre train of reflection. But it may just as easily, and certainly not less legitimately, be made to yield a more cheering and inspiring train of thought. Let me try, then, to shew how that contrast, and the whole Psalm of which it may be regarded as the keynote, may be made subservient to the purposes of consolation and encouragement. Let me endeavour to wrest this Psalm out of the hands of the pessimist, whose creed in brief is that human life, and indeed the whole universe of being, is vanity, a mistake, a thing that had better not have been; and to use it in the service of a Christian optimism which, while not denying the dark side of things, insists on looking at the bright side rather than at the dark, preferring to bask in the sunshine of Divine love rather than to spend life in the land of the shadow of death. I hope to make it appear that in pursuing this line of thought I am not contradicting the Psalmist or even deviating widely from the train of his reflections. For, on closer scrutiny, one finds that the Psalm is not so dark as it seems. There are rays of faith and hope appearing here and there, glimpses of light stealing through between the clouds, and lighting up the wintry landscape. Let us try to see, then, what can be made of this contrast between the eternal life of God and the fleeting life of man by those, and for those, who are required to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, in everything to give thanks, and always to abound in every good work.

1. "A thousand years in thy sight are as yesterday when it is past:" "The days of *our* years are three-

score years and ten." Oh, humbling, depressing, crushing contrast! Yes, in one sense; but, on the other hand, what if the Eternal One gather up into Himself the lives of his children when they pass away from the earth, so that they become partakers of his everlasting life? What we see on this earth is a constant succession of lives, one generation passing away, another coming into its place. But there is a life which is not subject to the law of succession, spreading itself, like the firmament, over all the generations of mankind, and contemporary with every one of them. What if our fleeting lives be so connected with that upper eternal life, that death means, not the extinction of these lives, but a transference of them from the regions below to the regions above? "We fly away," says the Psalmist. Yes, but whither? What becomes of the bird that flies from our ungenial clime at the approach of winter? Such questions have suggested themselves to thoughtful minds in all ages. It was such a question the Saxon noble meant to ask when, at the council convened to discuss the momentous question, Shall we receive Christianity, he said: "The present life of man seems to me, O king, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad. The sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within is safe from the wintry storm; but, after a short space of fine weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space; but of what

went before, or of what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." We know the answer which Christianity gives to the wistful question, Whither? But it is to be noted that our Psalm also has its answer, and a very good, substantially, indeed, the Christian answer. We fly away, Whither? To God, replies the Psalm in its very first sentence; to God, in whom the migratory spirit finds a home. "Lord *thou* hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." Mark the *our*: it expresses the consciousness of unity with the fathers who have long left the world, and who are conceived of as still existing with God. The Psalmist conceives of all the generations of Israel as one family, finding its bond of union, and having its habitation and home, in the bosom of the Everlasting One. It is as if he had said: We have been wanderers, strangers and pilgrims on the earth, in all our generations from the days of Abraham till now. But we have a home in Thee, O Eternal Adonai: it is our only but our sufficient home. The thought of it gives peace to our heart even in this mortal existence, amidst scenes of change and of trouble. And it is always there, ready to receive us, when we die, into the fellowship of those who have gone before. Surely life is not all gloom where one is able to cherish such thoughts of God and of the great hereafter as are naturally suggested by this pathetic word "dwelling-place."

2. The brevity of human life is saddening to think of, not merely because death seems to put a period to our conscious existence, but still more because it brings all our activities to a final pause. When the day ends,

busy labour ceases ; and so when Death strikes the hour, the brain ceases to think, and the heart to devise new schemes of usefulness, and the hands to toil in the execution of purposes long cherished. Now this thought is certainly very depressing, for there are many noble-minded men who are much more interested in the work of life than in life itself, and who desire continuance of life mainly because it affords further opportunity for labour. To such it may very naturally cause a pang to be overtaken by death in the midst of a worthy enterprise half executed. Think of Moses, for example. I do not positively affirm that he wrote this Psalm, though Delitzsch regards it as certain, and even Ewald admits that he might have been its author, if only the tradition could be relied on ; but, leaving the authorship of the Psalm undetermined, I may at least very legitimately take the Leader of the Exodus as an apt illustration of my argument. Think of Moses, then, trained by a very remarkable experience to be the deliverer of Israel, labouring faithfully for forty years to execute the Divine purpose, and, after all, doomed to die in the wilderness, within sight of the promised land. In view of such a doom we can imagine him saying to himself with a certain bitter emphasis : “ The days of our years are threescore years and ten. Would they were more ! Not for the mere pleasure of living, for that I care little ; but that I might finish the work which God has given me to do.” But if Moses had any such sad thoughts, he knew, if he really was the author of this Psalm, how to extract consolation from the everlasting life of God. For the Psalm does contain consolatory thoughts of a temper and force sufficient to reconcile us even to the interrup-

tion of our activities by death. In the first place, the Psalmist recollects that his work is in reality God's work. When he first speaks of it, he says : " Let *thy* work appear unto thy servants " (Verse 16). Only in subordination to this truth is the work afterwards called man's : " Establish thou the work of *our* hands upon us " (Verse 17). But the work being God's, two inferences follow. First, God can establish the work done by the men of one generation, so that it shall not be in vain when they have passed away from the scene. God lives on, and is always there to see that the labour of his deceased servants shall not come to nought, but be carried on unto completion, and so be established. But, secondly, God can do more than merely carry on and establish the work of his servants. He can cause it to assume far larger dimensions and far fairer proportions than it could ever have attained in their hands. This thought is finely expressed in the prayer : " Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." The "glory" referred to is the glory of a plan worked out, of a great historical drama carried out to its last act. The Psalmist has faith in the future coming of such a glory, and that faith makes him content to die while his own work as, for the time, God's instrument, is yet unfinished ; just as Simeon was content to die when his eyes had seen the infant Redeemer. He was content not merely because he believed that God could finish his work without him, but because he believed God would find other instruments in the next generation better fitted to do the work that still remained than he could ever have been.

These thoughts of the Psalmist are most rational

grounds of comfort in view of the certain fact that we shall die, leaving many a piece of work half done, and many a scheme affecting the kingdom of God far from its consummation. What we call our work is really God's work : this is one consideration which well laid to heart will comfort us concerning the labour of our hands. God deigns to use us in the carrying out of the purposes of his Providence, but we are in no wise necessary to Him. No matter who we are, He can do without us. This consideration, so consolatory in itself, is abused when it leads us to say, "It does not matter whether I work or remain idle : with me or without me, God's purposes will still be carried out." The right use of the reflection is to check self-importance and despondency ; to prevent us from thinking that when we die it will go ill with the Divine kingdom. Again, it is surely a peace-giving thought that, though we, the workers of threescore years and ten, pass away and leave our task unexecuted, God, the Everlasting Worker, is always there to carry on *his* work to its consummation—to a glory which we could never have achieved. This is a truth we are slow to learn. It does not come easy to any of us to believe, what nevertheless is most true, that, so far from there being any occasion of regret when our work is interrupted by death, it may even be very advantageous to God's work that our work should come to an end. It would be a poor outlook for the kingdom of God on earth if God's servants, even the best of them, were to live hundreds of years instead of threescore and ten. They would become a set of intolerable obstructives, wanting everything to stand still at the point at which their minds ceased to grow, and making it their special busi-

ness to prevent both God and man from carrying on the work in higher ways and to a higher end. Even as it is, too many degenerate into obstructives before the short period of human existence is fulfilled: how much greater would be the evil if men's lives were very greatly lengthened! We may be thankful, then, even for the sake of God's work, that man's life on earth is so short, if only we bear in mind that, after our bodies have mingled with the dust, God will do far greater things without us than ever He did by us; if only we remember the exhaustless resources, the infinite inventiveness, of the Divine Mind, concerning which the Prophet says, "There is no searching of his understanding;" if only we also remember the creative power of God, his unbounded capacity to do new things — an attribute which speculative philosophers and narrow-hearted Christians agree in denying or ignoring. The former tell us that God exhausted his power in creation, and has no reserve strength to work miracles. The latter too often think, though they may not openly say, "God can do nothing greater by the Church, in the Church, or for the Church, than He has done in the past. Oh, weak purblind mortals, whose days are threescore years and ten, why will ye thus drag God down to your own level? "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

3. It sometimes happens that a man's lot is cast in times when his life consists not so much in work as in *suffering*. Such a time was that of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, when the chosen people had nothing to do but drag out a weary aimless life, till death came

to relieve them. Such a time, too, was that memorable period in Scotland's history, from the restoration of Charles II. in 1660 to the Revolution in 1689, when our persecuted forefathers were hunted and shot down, and found a grim comfort in singing such Psalms as the Ninetieth, because they expressed a sense of misery as intense as their own. Such times may be said to be watches in the night of a Providential day, when good men wait—oh, with what unutterable longing!—for the dawn. These are times in which it is a very misery to live, when death seems more desirable than life, and the common span, not too short, but much too long. A good man living in such a time seems to himself to be under the perpetual frown of God, and complains, with the Psalmist, "We are consumed by thine anger, and in thy wrath are we troubled." Men living in happier times may sit in judgment on such utterances, and, with an air of superior wisdom, pronounce them superstitious, and suggestive of utterly false and unworthy views of the Divine character. Ah! it is easy for the happy and the prosperous to take bright and cheerful views of Providence, and to call God Father; but what would they have thought and said had they lived in one of the night-watches? Would they have found it quite so easy to believe that God was good, and to cherish a spirit of filial trust? And yet to maintain such a spirit, even when our days are darkest, is not impossible. The thought of God's everlasting life may help a man, even in the worst times, to realize the fact that such words as "anger" and "wrath" do not express the whole truth about God—that they express, indeed, rather the appearance than the reality of things.

If we lay to heart the words, "A thousand years are in thy sight as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night," it will at once occur to us that what seems to human vision a long, dreary, interminable period of misery, is to God but as a portion of a winter night, and man's seventy years dwindle into a few hours. But if so, what becomes of that "wrath" of which we are apt so grievously, and not altogether unnaturally, to complain? It is transmuted into a mere passing frown. "His anger endureth but a moment;" "In his favour is life;" "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Then the thought of God's everlasting life relieves the gloom of an evil time in another way. The most bitter ingredient in a good man's lot at such a time is, not the mere suffering which comes upon himself, but the dark thought forcing itself into his mind that God has ceased to care, if He ever cared, for the right; that He has abandoned his purpose; that He does not mean to carry out the undertaking which He initiated, and which He put it into the hearts of his servants to espouse with ardent and generous enthusiasm. God has brought us into this wilderness on pretence of leading us to the promised land, and, lo! He leaves us here to rot. He inspired me, Moses, with a patriotic ardour, which led me to prefer the freedom of my race to all the treasures and honours of Egypt; but now here I am, a man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me and brought me into darkness, and not into light, and hath filled me with the bitterness of defeated hope. When thoughts like these come into our minds, we need to remember that a thousand years are in God's sight as a day in ours. Do we think it strange

that a man should delay the execution of his purpose for a day? Do we infer from that that he has abandoned it? Why, then, should we imagine that God has abandoned his purpose because He defers its fulfilment for a generation, not to speak of a millennium? Why should we assume that Israel is never to get into Canaan, because she does not go up and possess it in our day? Nay, why should we despair of seeing a happy turn of affairs even in our own day? Let us rather hope in God, that He will yet give us cause to praise Him. Let us remember that the atmosphere above the clouds which obscure our vision is bright with the clear shining of the Divine Love, a light which will yet break through the clouds, and fall with cheerful quickening warmth on our saddened and weary hearts. And, remembering this, let us take up the prayer of our Psalm: "Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."

4. There is yet another way in which the leading thought of this Psalm may be made to minister to Christian hope. The contrast between our life and God's may help us to look with cheerful patience on the slow march of Providence, on the gradual, but sure, evolution by which the redeeming purposes of the Divine Love are unfolded and brought out. Even in comparatively happy times, when there are no such burdens and miseries to be endured as those of Israel in the wilderness, or of our forefathers in the years of persecution, earnest men are often made to feel that

God's work does not advance at as fast a rate as they would like, and indeed can scarcely be said to advance at all. And so they get disheartened, and work and pray in a spiritless manner. In this respect men are like children who, having sown a seed in the ground, expect a plant to spring out of it in a day. The assumption is that, if God means to favour a cause, or to grant success to an enterprise, He will do it soon, or even at once. Now, the fact is that this assumption is the reverse of true. It is God's way to work slowly, through a long period of preparation, and then suddenly at last: first, slow growth—through blade, and ear, and full corn; then suddenly the harvest. We must not, therefore, infer from the slow progress of a historical movement that it is not of God. Very often, the quicker the success, the less of the Divine is there in it. "Slow, but sure," is one of the marks of Divinity. For not only is it true that a thousand years are to God as one day to us, but it is also true, as St. Peter tells us, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years" are with us. We know what the effect of a thousand years *past* (for of a thousand years to come we cannot know the effect) is upon the human mind. We regard things that happened a thousand years ago very calmly, without any of the passion which thrilled the breasts of the men who lived when the events we now read of in history were taking place. *That* is the way in which God regards events the very day they happen. They are to Him as if they had happened a thousand years ago; so calm is the Divine temper, so far from the impatience and haste characteristic of us men who live but threescore years and ten. This comes of his being the Everlasting One. Yet, strange to say, while God

takes things so calmly and never hurries, He at the same time never forgets. A thousand years are to Him as one day to us. He is as much in earnest in his purpose at the end of a millennium as we are with ours the day we form it.

It would help to cheer us if we could lay this thought to heart, numbering our days, not merely to realize their brevity, but to realize, by contrast, the length of God's years. We have but a short time to work, and it is well to remember that, that we may be diligent. But God has a whole eternity wherein to work, and it is well to remember that also, that we may cease from fretfulness and impatience at the slow progress of the Divine Kingdom. It is by so numbering both our years and God's that we attain unto a wise heart. A wise heart is one that can at once labour devotedly and wait patiently. A foolish heart is a heart that starts with enthusiasm, and, on encountering discouragements and delays, forthwith cools down into indifference. How many such foolish hearts there are! how many unsteadfast hearts that grow weary in well doing, forgetting the word, "In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not!" And how many there are which are foolish in a still sadder sense—the hearts of triflers, without an aim, looking neither before nor after, numbering neither their own days nor God's eternal years! Of human life generally the Psalmist says, "We spend our years as a tale that is told;" more exactly, as a whisper, a murmur, a passing sigh, a light inarticulate sound, lasting a moment, then forgotten. And of the trifier's life this is emphatically true; for there is nothing real in it—nothing that abides. It is a life which no rational man would care to live, since every

rational man has wisdom enough to know that life, to be worth living, must have a serious purpose.

Even with this wisdom, however, we must not be content. We must strive to cherish hopeful views of life, such as we have seen this Psalm, when properly interpreted, suggests, or earnest purpose and manly energy will die out of our souls. *We* do not need to go back to the Old Testament in search of motives to such a life, but it is surely well to find that even so sombre-looking a Scripture as this Psalm can be made to teach the lesson that St. Paul taught when he said, "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." The Psalm teaches us that our labour is not in vain in respect of reward, for the bosom of God is the eternal home of all faithful souls; nor in respect to the continuance of our work after we are dead, for God is there to carry it on. Our life, according to the teaching of this Psalm, is not vain, even if our work consist not so much in doing as in suffering; for the dark watch of the night is but the prelude of a new dawn, and the weary waiting only prepares longing hearts to welcome the dawn. Our life is not vain, finally, though it may seem to have produced no sensible advance of the great cause of truth and righteousness; for the movements of Providence, as becomes the Eternal One, are slow, and, like the movements of the planets, noiseless and invisible; yet, though slow, nevertheless sure, and certainly helped on by every genuine earnest life. The prayer of the faithful—"Establish thou the work of our hands upon us"—never fails to be fulfilled, though the fulfilment may not always be patent to our dim eyes.

*A FEW VARIOUS READINGS IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT.*

As I have reason to believe that our glance at a few of the most remarkable various readings in the Epistle to the Romans was interesting to some of the readers of THE EXPOSITOR, I will in the following paper group together one or two typical classes of variation in other parts of the New Testament, and will endeavour to state the principles on which we are now enabled to decide with tolerable certainty on what were the actual words of the sacred writers.

It is a remarkable fact that in no less than four memorable instances the question of the reading affects the evidence of the text to the cardinal doctrine of all Christianity—the divinity of our blessed Lord. I mentioned in my last paper the assertion of the Emperor Julian, that in no passage of the New Testament has St. Paul directly called Jesus “God.” In speaking of Romans ix. 5, we saw that the most probable punctuation—one which was all but unanimously accepted till the days of Erasmus—furnishes us with a direct disproof of Julian’s assertion, since, if Christ is not in that verse called “God blessed for ever,” we have an order of words which does not occur in a single other passage of the New Testament. Yet sufficient doubt must remain on this point to render the verse an uncertain support in controversy, on the principle that *Nil agit exemplum quod litem lite resolvit*. Perhaps when we find that three other important verses are liable to the same doubt, our readers may begin to think that textual criticism has been obliged to surrender some im-

portant bulwarks of the Christian faith. Even if it were so, the question of duty would be absolutely plain. The task of the textual critic is to establish the soundest canons of criticism and to search all available authorities, and having done this, to come to his conclusion with inflexible honesty, in spite of all doctrinal bias. The temptation to do otherwise may be very strong. We see that it is a temptation to which transcribers have succumbed in 1 Corinthians vii. 5 (τῇ νηστείᾳ καὶ); in 1 John v. 7 (the Three Witnesses); in Romans xii. 13 (μνείαις); in John v. 34 (the angel at Bethesda); in Acts viii. 37 (the eunuch's profession); and in other passages. Even the translators of our English Bible have succumbed to it. They sacrificed accuracy to policy in Acts ii. 47 ("those that *should be saved*") and in Hebrews x. 38 ("if *any man* draw back"), in favour of Calvinism; from a prelatic bias, in Acts xx. 28 ("overseers"); and from an anti-Romanist bias, in 1 Corinthians xi. 27 ("and" for "*or*"), and in Galatians i. 18 (to "*see*" for to "*consult*" Peter). But it is one of many hopeful signs that in these days no dogmatic consideration is allowed to outweigh the force of evidence when we are estimating external authority for a reading; and it is the common aim of all to decide upon the actual text by questions, not of policy, but of simple truth. Critics honestly decide, not upon the reading which they would like best, but on the one which seems to be best established. To regret this would not only be base and faithless, but would shew a spirit most fatal to the cause of Christian apology. No defender of the faith is more dangerous than one who fights with weapons alike treacherous and weak. If the doctrine of Christ's

divinity had been meant to depend on single texts, we may be sure that the same Providence which has preserved for us the sacred writings, and protected them amid the many perils to which I adverted in the last paper, would have also preserved above all doubt and suspicion that which would *then* have been absolutely essential to our faith. But that great Catholic verity depends in no wise on a few isolated expressions. Nay, rather it results from the teaching of the whole Bible, from the promise to the woman in Genesis to the vision of the Son of man in the Apocalypse. It is written large over the four Gospels; it is found implicitly and explicitly in every Epistle of St. Paul, from the First to the Thessalonians down to the Second to Timothy, and it is involved in every page of the great Epistles to the Galatians, Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians. And, besides this, we shall see that a faithful handling of textual evidence will leave us nothing to regret. If the balance of evidence is against the controversial testimony of Acts xx. 28 and 1 Timothy iii. 16, on the other hand, it inclines in favour of readings scarcely less important in Colossians ii. 2; James i. 18; and 1 Peter iii. 15.

1. In Acts xx. 28 the latter half of the Verse in our Authorized Version runs as follows: "*To feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*" But it is uncertain whether the true reading is "*of God*" (Θεοῦ) or "*of the Lord*" (Κυρίου). The external evidence is singularly balanced. "*Of God*" is supported by $\aleph$, B, many cursives, the Vulgate and Philoxenian Syriac (*text*), and by Basil, Epiphanius, Ambrose, &c. "*Of the Lord*" is supported by A, C, D, E, many cursives, the Philoxenian *margin*, the

Thebaic, Memphitic, and Armenian Versions, and by Irenæus, Didymus, Eusebius, Cyril of Alexandria, Jerome, and Augustine. Rejecting the weakly eclectic readings "*of the Lord God*," "*of God and of the Lord*," "*of the Lord and God*," found in G, H, and various cursives; and, admitting that the external evidence for Θεοῦ and Κυρίου is about equal, we have to decide on other grounds which of the two expressions, "*the church of God*," or "*the church of the Lord*," St. Paul was most likely to have used in connection with the clause, "*which he purchased by means of his own blood*."

But even when we turn to *paradiplomatic* evidence, there is much to be said on both sides.

If it be urged that in other passages St. Paul uses the phrase "*the church of God*" no fewer than ten times, but never once "*the church of the Lord*" or "*the church of Christ*," it may be answered that the latter expressions are so entirely natural and unobjectionable, that the *prevalence* of the other usage furnishes no decisive proof that St. Paul might not have diverged into this phrase. Now if, in speaking to the Ephesian Elders, he actually did alter his common formula, there would be a strong tendency on the part of the transcribers to revert to the normal expression, either by accident or by design. That the merely *unusual* character of an expression is no ground for rejecting it, when it is otherwise unobjectionable, is decisively proved by the single instance of "*spirit of Jesus*," which is the undoubted reading of Acts xvi. 7 (s, A, B, C, D, E), though it is found in that place alone.

If then St. Paul said "*the church of the Lord*"—a phrase in this instance peculiarly applicable, because

he is speaking of the *administration* of the Church of which Christ is the living Head—there exists a strong reason why this reading should have been altered in the MSS., often by the very slight transformation of $\overline{\kappa\chi}$ into $\overline{\theta\chi}$.

If however the argument is in favour of the reading *Κυρίου*, it will perhaps be asserted that there was at least an equal temptation to tamper with the reading *Θεοῦ*. That reading—involving, as it does, so startling a mental juxtaposition as "*the blood of God*"—may, it has been argued, have been of a kind which a scribe would be tempted to soften down. The probability and improbability of this temptation depends on the stream of tendency in the early Church. Now Athanasius says: "The Scriptures have *nowhere* handed down to us the phrase "*blood of God*" apart from the flesh; or that God suffered apart from the flesh and rose again. *Such audacious expressions* (τολμήματα) *belong to the Arians.*"¹ I cannot see that the words "apart from the flesh" weaken—at any rate to the extent which is generally maintained—the distinct assertion of Athanasius that the Scriptures do not sanction the phrase "*blood of God*." It is true that he is arguing against the Apollinarians, who, as Hooker says, maimed and misinterpreted and pared away that which concerned the humanity of Christ; but the phrase "*blood of God*," if *Θεοῦ* be indeed the genuine reading in this Verse, stands quite bare and naked, without any qualification. It seems to me that it is not only liable to the censure of Athanasius as a *τόλμημα* such as Arians might have abused in controversy, but also furnishes

¹ Athan. c. Apollin. ii. 14. *δίχα* (not *διὰ*) *σαρκὸς* is almost certainly the correct reading in both clauses.

a proof that Athanasius did not recognize it as genuine in the text of his day. The authority of Athanasius is therefore in favour of the reading *Kυρίου*. But then it may be answered that the text may have been corrupted from *Θεοῦ* into *Kυρίου* before his day, and in consequence of the very feeling which he here expresses. This would be a powerful argument if the feeling expressed by the great Alexandrian archbishop was at all universal in the Church. This was not, I think, the case. The fine instinct of the great philosophic theologian was not shared by others. For instance, in the Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians (c. i.) there seems to be little doubt that the true reading is "*by the blood of God*," a phrase also used by Tertullian, though it was censured by Origen. If, then, as early as Ignatius (A.D. 107) such phrases as "*blood of God*" and "*passion of God*" (*ad Rom.* 6) had already come into vogue, it seems to me *most* improbable that if St. Paul had said "*the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood*," the phrase would have been corrected in the earlier copies into "*the church of the Lord*." The heresies of Eutychians and Patripassians, which might have led a scribe to alter the phrase, were far later, whereas the feelings which led to such terms as *Adelphotheos*, "*brother of God*," as applied to James, and *Deipara*, or "*mother of God*," as a title of the Virgin, were very early at work. But this early tendency would not at all prove that such expressions were *unobjectionable*, when they do not receive the direct sanction of the apostles. The Nicene Fathers saw and admitted that language not only undesirable, but even generally (though not intentionally) heretical, had been sometimes used by some of their perfectly

orthodox predecessors before the growth of heresy had led to the accurate formulation of theologic thought. No one I think can question the fact that the phrase "*blood of God*," if genuine, is one wholly isolated and unique in the New Testament. It was at least a profound and reverent instinct, if we ought not to regard it as a "grace of superintendency," which withheld the sacred writers from the predication of purely human attributes when they were speaking of the Divine and Co-eternal Son. We see from all their teaching that they would have accepted the great Catholic formula, ἀληθῶς, τελῶς, ἀδιαίρετως, ἀσυγχύτως — *truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly*—to express their faith in Christ as *truly* God, *perfectly* man, *indivisibly* God-man, *distinctly* God and man; but they carefully avoid the use of language which would be needlessly staggering to the faithful, and which on the lips of unbelievers might easily become intolerably profane. The question of the reading in this Verse will probably be solved differently by different writers till the end of time; but to me it seems most probable that "*the church of the Lord*" is the right reading, because (1), though it does not happen to occur elsewhere, it is a most natural expression; (2) because it avoids a juxtaposition so alien from apostolic thought that no parallel to it can be adduced from the New Testament; (3) because, if St. Paul used it, there was a distinct bias, which would have led to alteration, first perhaps in the margin, then in the text; (4) because this alteration, though leading to a phrase which was deemed objectionable by great theologic thinkers, was yet in accordance with early terminology in the Church; and (5) because, if St. Paul *had* written "*the church of God*," the early transcribers would have felt

strong reason to retain it in the interests of orthodoxy, and no temptation to alter it into the less usual collocation, "church of the Lord."

2. 1 Timothy iii. 16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifested in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

This Verse, interesting also for its rhythmical character, which stamps it as being probably one of the few fragments of hymnology which are preserved for us in the New Testament, would again furnish a strong direct assertion of the divinity of Christ if the reading were certain; but instead of "God" ($\overline{\text{OC}}$), the true reading is almost certainly "who" (OC).

The facts are these. "*God*" ($\overline{\text{OC}}$) is the reading of K, L, and about two hundred cursives. B is here defective.

"*Who*" (OC) is the reading of $\aleph$, A, C, F, G, and three cursives; and ð ("*which*") is the reading of D and the Latin Versions.

A curious battle has risen about the readings of two of the uncials. As to $\aleph$, Tischendorf unhesitatingly declares that the reading is ðs , and that it has only been so cautiously altered into $\Theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ by the latest corrector—in the twelfth century—as to leave no real doubt as to the original reading. On the other hand, A—our Alexandrine manuscript in the British Museum—has been examined with microscopes, and with very differing results. It is now getting very thin and worn; but Young, Huish, Mill, and others in the last century declared the reading to be $\overline{\text{OC}}$ ("God"). Porson, on the other hand, declared that it was OC ("who").

Quite recently the manuscript has been most minutely scrutinized by Bishop Ellicott, who asserts that the original reading was “*indisputably*” oc , and that the suspected original diameter in the Θ was really due to the tongue or *sagitta* of an *E* on the other side of the page. On the other hand, Mr. Scrivener, after examining it at least twenty times in as many years, and once during a singularly bright hour, both with and without a lens, has “always felt convinced” that the first reading was $\overline{\text{oc}}$. Then again in C—the palimpsest *Codex Ephraemi*—the reading is declared by Tischendorf to be oc , though there is a cross line within the *O*, which he believes to be due to the correctors.

But whatever doubt any one may feel about the readings of A and C, there can be no doubt that “*who*” is the right reading: (1) because a relative “who” or “which” is found in *all* the earlier Versions; (2) because the testimony of patristic quotations (as well as the less important argument from silence) is overwhelmingly in favour of the relative; (3) because the masculine oc following the neuter word “mystery” is grammatically the harder reading, and therefore more likely to have been corrected; and (4) because the correction of oc into $\overline{\text{oc}}$ could be made by two slight touches, whereas if $\overline{\text{oc}}$ had been the original reading, there is nothing to account for the wilful and difficult falsification of it into a less grammatical phrase. Few critics of any note now hesitate to express their conviction that the Verse should run, “Great is the mystery of godliness, who was manifested in the flesh,” &c.

3. If in these two passages we lose a definite assertion of Christ’s Godhead, it is probable that textual

criticism will ultimately (at least to some extent) restore us the loss in other passages.

a. In Colossians ii. 2 there is a strange diversity of readings. Our Received Version follows K, L, and the majority of the cursives, in reading "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). There are no less than ten variations of this in other Manuscripts, Versions, and quotations. The very fact of the variety shews that they must all have started from some remarkable expression, which the transcribers desired to amplify or explain. Now, it is a rule of criticism that a reading is always to be preferred when it could not have sprung naturally from the other readings, but when all the other readings can be accounted for as deviations from it. Adopting this canon, it is easy to see that the mother-reading is "the knowledge of the mystery τοῦ Θεοῦ Χριστοῦ, κ. τ. λ." This is the actual reading of B, and the Verse is quoted in this form by Hilary of Poitiers. The *translation* is perhaps less certain. Some render it, "*of the God Christ;*" others, "*of the God of Christ;*" others again, as Dr. Lightfoot, and with more probability, connect the Χριστοῦ with the succeeding words, "*the knowledge of the mystery of God, (even) Christ, in whom are all the treasures of knowledge hidden.*" The readings have been doubtless caused by the obscure brevity of the original. If rendered "*the God Christ,*" it stood completely alone in Pauline phraseology. If rendered "*the God of Christ,*" it was equally without exact parallel, and also might seem to furnish a handle to heretics. Hence arose the gloss of D, "of God, which is Christ;" of K, L, and most cursives, followed by our text; and

the quotation of the text as though it were "*of God in Christ*" by Clement of Alexandria.

β. In John i. 18, if "*only begotten God*" is not a certain reading, it is at any rate a very ancient variation on "*only begotten Son.*" The change, indeed, from $\Upsilon\Theta$ to $\Theta\Theta$ would be small, but we find "*only begotten God*" in $\aleph$, B, C, L, in the Peshito-Syriac and other Versions, and in the quotations of many Fathers. It is true that strong objections may be urged against this reading, but those who wish to see how ably and powerfully it may be defended should read the monograph which has been devoted to it by the Rev. Professor Hort.

γ. The readings which we have examined are of great theological importance. The next at which we shall glance will shew us how a wrong reading is able to obscure our entire conception of New Testament history.

The main object of the Acts of the Apostles is to narrate the extension of the Church to the Gentiles. It has been called "*an ancient Eirenicon*;" but if it was written with this conciliatory design, it was to prove that the work of Paul among the Gentiles was sanctioned by the Twelve, and that there was no such fatal schism between the Apostles of the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision as subsequently arose among some who called themselves their followers. The work of Stephen, the work of Philip, the work of Peter, are all divine moments in the dispensation which was to receive the mightiest human impulse for its fulfilment in the work of Paul. Viewed in this light, the culminating point of the Acts historically is Acts xi. 20. Stephen had suffered martyrdom because

he had argued against the eternal validity of the Mosaic legislation. Saul, doing to the Gentiles an inestimable service as a propagator of the gospel, even at the moment when he appeared to be its deadliest enemy, had scattered the members of the Christian community in every direction. In consequence of this Philip had won the hated Samaritans into the fold of Christ, and had boldly baptized into the Christian brotherhood the mutilated alien who was excluded by his very condition from the Mosaic communion. In consequence of this same persecution Peter had made a missionary tour in the plain of Sharon, and had been led by Divine guidance to admit Cornelius into full Christian fellowship without the rite of circumcision. But up to this time the gospel had not been directly and deliberately proclaimed to *Gentiles*. That was done for the first time by certain Cyprians and Cyrenians at Antioch. From this event sprang all the others with which the remainder of the book is almost exclusively occupied.

The Jews of Jerusalem, hearing that *Gentiles* were being converted in large numbers, sent Barnabas to report upon and to direct the movement. Finding the work grow too vast for him, Barnabas sought the aid of Paul. In consequence of this the success of the gospel at Antioch became so marked, that the city at once took the place as the second capital and starting-point of the Christian faith. Here first the Gentiles perceived that "Christians" were something more than an eccentric sect of Jews, and therefore invented for them the name by which through all ages they have been known. Here Paul, withstanding Peter to the face, first felt that Gentile Christians *could* not be,

and proved that they *ought* not to be, bound by "the by-laws of a Ghetto." And here it first became so manifest that the true ideal seed of Abraham would be found far more among faithful Gentiles than among unbelieving Jews, that it was from this city that Paul and Barnabas started on their vast mission to evangelize the world.

The whole story of the Acts, therefore, hinges upon the fact that at Antioch certain scattered brethren first ventured to take the bold initiative on which, humanly speaking, the entire future of the Church was to depend. "And some of them" [*i.e.*, of those who had been scattered by Saul's persecution], "arriving at Antioch, began ALSO to speak also TO THE GREEKS, preaching the Lord Jesus."

To the GREEKS (*Ἕλληνας*), *i.e.*, to the GENTILES: and at this crucial point our Version follows the strange error of the manuscripts which omit "*also*," and which read "*to the GRECIANS*" (*Ἑλληνιστάς*), *i.e.*, Hellenized Jews. It is true that "GREEKS" is only found in A and D, for here the transcriber of δ must have been half asleep, and has the odd and careless error "*Evangelists*." But even if the reading were more deficient in external evidence, we might adopt it with absolute certainty from *internal* evidence. The word "Hellenists" or "Grecians" means merely "Greek-speaking Jews." There was nothing new in preaching to them. They, from the earliest days, had been included among the members of the Christian Church, and some at least of the seven "deacons" had been "Grecians." It would have been most superfluous for St. Luke to tell us (Acts xi. 19) that those who were scattered came as far as Cyprus and Phoenice and Antioch, speaking

the word *to none but Jews*, and then in the next Verse to add that some of them when they entered Antioch *also* began to speak to "*Hellenists*." The great majority of Jews in Cyprus, Phoenice, &c., must, from the nature of the case, have been Hellenists or Grecians; and there would have been no sort of climax in the next Verse, which is evidently introduced as the sequel and crowning point of the narrative; there would not even have been an additional fact in mentioning that the scattered Christians spoke *also* to Grecians at Antioch. Nor would the conversion of Grecians have excited any special notice at Jerusalem, seeing that numbers of Hellenists lived at Jerusalem, and had their own special synagogues. The force of these considerations is so strong that almost every critical editor of any judgment admits "*Greeks*" (*i.e.*, Gentiles) as the true reading without any hesitation, and there can be no doubt that its adoption in the Revised Version will restore this text to its true importance in the historic sequence, which the false reading so entirely obliterates.

5. The next instance that I shall take will shew the influence which has been exercised by personal and ecclesiastical prejudices in modifying the sacred text.

In 1 Corinthians vii. 3 our Version reads: "Let the husband render unto the wife *due benevolence*" (τὴν ὀφειλομένην εὐνοίαν). This is the merest gloss, and is only found in a single unimportant uncial; whereas the true reading, "*the debt*" (*i.e.*, *debitum tori*, "the marriage debt"), is found in $\aleph$, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The whole context shews the true meaning, and the gloss is either due to euphemism or to entire mistake. This is comparatively harmless, but in the fifth Verse we

have traces of ascetic tampering. Our Version reads : "Defraud ye not one another, except it be with consent for a time, *that ye may give yourselves up* (σχολάζητε) *for fasting and prayer ; and come together again* (συνέρχεσθε), that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Now the true reading in this Verse is not σχολάζητε, but σχολάσητε (s, A, B, C, D, E, F, G), and on the irresistible authority of these same uncials the "*fasting*" is an interpolation ; and instead of "*come together again*," we should read, "*be together again*." The reason for these glosses, interpolations, and tamperings with the true text, are betrayed by the word "*fasting*." Even in the apostles' days there arose heretics imbued with the Essenian and Manichæan notions of the inherent corruption of matter, and the consequent necessity of such practices as would most tend to the suppression and discouragement of the body. Hence at Ephesus there were some who "forbade to marry, and commanded to abstain from meats ;" and in the valley of the Lycus there were some who relied on valueless ascetic rules, like "Touch not, taste not, handle not." These views gained wide prevalence in some sects of the early Church. They thought it desirable to find in Scripture more direct and more frequent sanctions for fasting than it really contains ; and they tended more and more to that discouragement of all sexual relations, which ended in the glorification of virginity as a far superior condition to marriage, and exalted the virtue, if not of ἀειπαρθενία, at any rate of living apart, in the married state. St. Paul had used the *aorist* verb (σχολάσητε), "that ye may have leisure for prayer" at *special seasons* : they altered this into the present, to imply that this undis-

turbed leisure for prayer, and therefore the intermission of the marriage debt, should be *continuous and habitual*. St. Paul used the verb "*be together again*," because, though there might be temporary separation, he represented the living together as the *normal state* of the married life ; but this has been altered into "*come together again*," in the same interests as the other corrections.

6. My sole object has been to present the reader with one or two typical instances *of the importance* of readings, not to multiply instances indefinitely. But lest any reader should carry away a notion that the true text is more uncertain than really is the case, I will furnish one or two instances of the almost religious care of the transcribers in general. The influences which I have enumerated in this and the previous paper were undoubtedly at work, but happily we are so able to estimate those influences that the instances in which we cannot form a plausible opinion as to the words actually written are neither very numerous nor very important. With the aid of Eastern and Western groups of manuscripts, with numerous quotations in Greek and Latin Fathers, with Versions of great antiquity and in many languages, to help us, we are arriving with more and more certainty at the original text. The following are instances in which the most trivial accidents of expression and pronunciation have been preserved to us over a period of eighteen centuries.

a. In Philippians ii. 1 our Authorized Version follows the reading *εἰ τινα σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοὶ*, "*if there be any bowels and mercies*," i.e., if there be such a thing as affection and compassion. Now this reading gives

us good grammar, and is found in most cursive manuscripts and in Clement of Alexandria and other Fathers, *but it is not found in a single uncial*. The reading of all the uncials without exception— α , A, B, C, D, E, F, G, K, L—is the daring solecism, $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμὴ, “*if any one* (be) affection and compassion.” Now, although the testimony of the uncials is rightly regarded as being far more important than that of the cursives, and although it is a recognized canon that the harder reading, which scribes would be tempted to alter, is more likely to be right than the easier, which they would naturally accept, yet in this case our modern English editors—Alford, Ellicott, Wordsworth, but not Lightfoot—throw both principles overboard, and treat the startling $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις σπλάγχνα as a mere careless mechanical repetition of the $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις which immediately precedes it. If they are right, we have a very strong proof of the extraordinary faithfulness with which, in writing the uncials, the transcribers scrupulously retained the error which they found before them. But I am strongly inclined to think that St. Paul, in dictating the letter, *did actually say* $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις σπλάγχνα. He is making an intense appeal, and the bold expression, “if any one be bowels and mercies,” is one of his many phrases which are, as Luther said, “like living creatures, and have hands and feet.” Perhaps he hardly *intended* the solecism, but having begun the sentence with $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις, was haunted by the expression, and in his eagerness repeats it, letting the syllogism of emotion supersede the syllogism of grammar. D even reads $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ τις παραμύθιον, which is a solecism of gender, as the other is of number. That reading would preserve the *epanaphora*, or repeated phrase, still more completely

but cannot be adopted on the slender authority of one or even two uncials. But it seems to me unlikely that *all* the uncials would faithfully reproduce ἐξ τῆς σπλάγχνης if it had not been in the original autograph ; and I seem to see in the reading an interesting trace of the submissive faithfulness of the Apostle's amanuensis. He, in his humble reverence, might easily think that it was not for him to alter what St. Paul had spoken, and that his Apostle, like the Emperor Sigismund, might claim to be *supra grammaticam*.

In one other instance, if not in two, we have a mispronunciation—in short, a wrong aspirate—immortalized by the same religious care.

a. In Romans iv. 18 we have the barbarism of *Helpis* for *Elpis* (hope) in the phrase, ἐφ' ἐλπίδι, in C, D, F, G. This wrong aspirate is very common in illiterate inscriptions, and one who spoke Greek as a foreigner might easily have slipped into it by mistake. Here the error may be due to the amanuensis, if the reading be accepted ; but this is not the case in our next example.

β. In Galatians we are reading an Epistle in which Paul seized the pen, and wrote with his own hand. Now, in Chapter ii. 18, we find the reading οὐχ Ἰουδαϊκῶς in A, B, C, and οὐχι in D, and it is so found in several quotations. Nothing is more likely than that a Jew, speaking Greek with the Jewish pronunciation of *Yhehoudîm* in his mind, and not the Greek unaspirated Ἰουδαϊκῶς, would have both pronounced and written the words οὐχ Ἰουδαϊκῶς. If this be so, it is an interesting case of accuracy preserved in a series of transcriptions. We find similar abnormal aspirates in ἐφιδε (Acts iv. 29), ἀφελπιζοντες (Luke vi. 35), and οὐχ ὀψεσθε (Luke xvii. 22).

Brief and imperfect as are these remarks, they will, we trust, shew to our readers something of the importance of the immense labour which has been bestowed upon the collation of manuscripts, and some of the most elementary principles of criticism. They may help to furnish a passing illustration of more than one great historical tendency, and they may leave in our minds a feeling of thankfulness that the faithful study of the text has not given us a single cause for regret, while it has indefinitely deepened our conviction of the general integrity with which the Church has preserved through so many ages the precious deposit of her sacred writings.

F. W. FARRAR.

ON THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

A JEWISH EXPOSITION.

WE find in the New Testament that our Lord more than once¹ warned his disciples that they should refrain from troubling themselves about or trying to penetrate into the knowledge of those "times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." The tendency to make such investigations was very common among the Jews, who were anxiously looking forward to the restoration of the temporal kingdom to Israel. We can see this from the tone of Gamaliel's remarks² when the apostles were brought before the Jewish council. The people were ready to run after a Judas or a Theudas, if he only proclaimed in loud enough tones that he "was some great one." But we can also see from the concluding portion of that speech that in the minds of the learned and thoughtful among

¹ See Mark xiii. 32 ; Acts i. 7.

² Ibid. v. 34-39.

the Jews there had grown up a feeling that such speculations and the movements to which they gave rise were best let alone.

In the light of the words of Gamaliel, the following passage from the Talmud¹ is full of meaning. The Verse under discussion and on which the comments are based is Habakkuk ii. 3. On this Rabbi Nathan remarks: "This verse penetrates and goes down to the very depths" [by which he means that it is here intimated how unsearchable are God's counsels concerning the coming of the Messiah, and that in consequence attempts to penetrate such mysteries are not to be entered on]. "*For,*" it says, "*the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak* [or, as the Rabbi takes it, it is blowing, panting, hastening toward the end²] *and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*" "This means," says the Rabbi, "Do not calculate and set down any fixed time for Messiah's appearance, as our Rabbis did who explained Daniel vii. 25, *Until a time and times and the dividing of time.*" On this Rashi, on the authority of Rabbi Shemuel ben David, gives the explanation that of old a calculation was based on this passage in the following way. *A time* was interpreted to be the duration of the Egyptian captivity, *i.e.*, 400 years, therefore the smallest plural "*times*" must mean 800 years, and the dividing of time must be half 400, and thus a total was arrived at of 1400 years for the time which was to elapse before Messiah appeared. "Nor," continues the Rabbi, "should we calculate on this matter as Rabbi Samlai did, who was

¹ T. B. *Sanhedrin*, 97 b.

² Gesenius renders, *anhelat, festinat ad finem.*

explaining Psalm lxxx. 5, *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure.*" Here again Rashi, on the same authority, explains that Rabbi Samlai took *shalish*, which in our Bibles is translated *in great measure*, in its literal sense, and rendered it *a third part*, and on that rendering he framed a calculation thus. The two periods to which "the drinking of tears" could most properly refer were the Egyptian and the Babylonian captivities. If they were called a third part, then, reasoned he, the time which must elapse before Messiah comes must be three times as long as they were. Now the people were in Egypt 400 years and in Babylon 70 years, and therefore the period meant is to be 1410 years. "Nor" (again we have Rabbi Nathan speaking) "should we conclude about Messiah's coming as Rabbi Akiba¹ did, who explained Haggai ii. 6, *Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth.*" Here Rashi gives his own note, and tells us that Rabbi Akiba laid great stress on the words, *Yet once, it is a "little" while*, which he took to signify that God would give Israel a "little" portion of glory, and this he referred to the time of the grandeur of Herod's temple. When that brief glory had passed away he believed that Messiah would soon come, and heaven and earth be shaken, and the Roman Empire be overthrown. "But," explains Rabbi Nathan, "he ought not to have expounded thus, for the facts of history refuted such exposition, seeing that the

¹ Rabbi Akiba joined the party of Bar-kokheba (Barcochebas), to whom he gave that title, *son of a star*, in allusion to the prophecy of Balaam, which was interpreted to refer to the Messiah, and had no doubt been widely circulated in the East, and become known to the Magi who came to Bethlehem. Akiba was taken prisoner at Bethar in the revolt of the Jews (A.D. 135), and is said to have been put to death by most cruel tortures.

first kingdom was 70 years (*i.e.*, the *independent* rule of the Asmonean princes¹), and the second kingdom (that of Herod) was 52 years, and the kingdom of Kozeba² was two years and a half." He means that there had been times of glory before that one on which Akiba arbitrarily fixed as the date at which Messiah should appear. Then the Gemara³ asks: "What mean the words, *It [or he] 'bloweth' towards the end, and doth not lie?*" Rabbi Shemuel, son of Nachmani, in the name of Rabbi Jonathan said, It means: May his spirit be blown away (and perish) whoever over-anxiously calculates about the end. For [in consequence of such calculations] people have said when the [so-calculated] end came and he [Messiah] did not appear, that he would never come at all. Yet *wait anxiously for him*, for it says, *If he tarry, wait anxiously for him*. But perhaps you may say, We are anxiously waiting, but He [God] is not anxious. To answer this Holy Writ says,⁴ *Therefore the Eternal doth anxiously wait to be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted,*⁵ *that he may have mercy upon you*. But then (you may reply), seeing that we are anxiously waiting and He is anxiously waiting, what holds back [the coming of the

¹ The whole period of the Maccabean rule was 103 years, but the Jews reckon only the more independent portion as a real kingdom.

² To express their sense of Bar-kokheba's false pretensions, the Jews thus modified his name, and so connected it with the verb *kazab*, "to lie," and stamped him as an arch deceiver.

³ *I.e.*, the critical investigation of the sense of the Mishna. ⁴ Isa. xxx. 18.

⁵ This exaltation the Jews explain as God lifting Himself higher than the mere quality of justice (by which He was first known to men, and which would have demanded punishment for all sin), and becoming a God that delighteth in mercy. To understand this it must be remembered that God's name *Elohim* (which is applied also to earthly judges in Scripture) is interpreted to signify his character of justice, but that the Tetragrammaton (*IHVH*), by which name God revealed Himself to Israel through Moses (Exod. vi. 3), expressed his higher quality of mercy, which He can exercise towards all men by virtue of his eternity.

Messiah? The measure¹ of justice is holding it back. But (you will say) seeing that the measure of justice is holding it back, of what use is it for us anxiously to wait for it? To obtain a reward for this very waiting, for it says, in the same verse of Isaiah, *Blessed are all they that anxiously wait for him.*"

J. RAWSON LUMBY.

A BIBLICAL NOTE.

ROMANS ix. 5.

THE remarks of Canon Farrar, in the March number of THE EXPOSITOR, on the punctuation of this Verse, are hardly sufficient to place the question at issue fairly before the reader. I avail myself, therefore, of the Editor's permission to offer a few additional words on the subject, and I will endeavour to do so with all practicable brevity, touching only the critical points raised in the article to which I refer (p. 217).

Probably no person of competent knowledge would deny that the Verse may properly be rendered thus: "Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom Christ came, as concerning the flesh. He who is God over all *is* blessed for ever." This is exactly the Greek order of the words, and this rendering is unquestionably quite as admissible, grammatically, as that of the Authorized Version. In favour of the latter, however, it is urged—1. That "it is the most natural way of taking the words." But that depends upon several considerations. Of these I may mention as of much importance the general analogy of St. Paul's Epistles in the use of the word *θεός*. The Apostle employs this word more than five hundred times, and he has never once applied it to Christ, except in this doubtful instance and one other case² which is equally disputable. The word *εὐλογητός* too is never applied to Christ in the New Testament, but only to God. Is it then really the "most natural" to think that St. Paul in this case terms Christ, not only God, but "God over *all*," and *εὐλογητός* as well?

2. The words, we are further told, were understood according to the Authorized punctuation "by the early Church." This statement requires qualification. Tischendorf more justly observes: "Antiquitas

¹ *I.e.*, God's quality of justice.

² Titus ii. 13.

Christiana luculenter etiam testatur verba *ο ων επι*, &c., non cum *ο Χριστος* conjungenda esse ;” and in illustration of this he quotes two passages from Eusebius, which shew that the words were not uniformly or exclusively applied to Christ. But yet, granting that the Authorized punctuation is that of the ancient Church, still the ancient Church, or rather the Fathers who represent it, were not infallible. With their minds preoccupied with the Logos idea, they could scarcely fail to apply the Verse in that way. But how little value should, in some cases, be attributed to the testimony of the Fathers, Canon Farrar has himself, in this very article, given us the opportunity of judging. He admits, in so many words, that “even the Fathers are often led by theological prejudice to insincere handling of the word of God” (p. 205). In truth, these ancient writers are too often uncritical and credulous ; and it is clear that their authority in a question of this kind may be disregarded, provided always that sufficient grounds exist (as in the present case) for disregarding it.

3. It is urged that these words are not a doxology, because of the position of the word *εὐλογητός*. This too may be granted, although doxologies may be found in the Septuagint in which, as here, that word does not stand at the beginning of the sentence. Nevertheless, the words clearly form what may be termed a doxological expression, such as we may find in Romans i. 25, *τὸν κτίσαντα, ὃς ἐστὶν εὐλογητός εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*, and in 2 Corinthians xi. 31, *ὁ Θεός, . . . ὁ ὢν εὐλογητός εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*. These two cases are closely parallel to the words now under notice, and they are introduced in exactly the same incidental and parenthetical manner.

Of the evidence of the Manuscripts Canon Farrar observes that “in most uncials there is no punctuation worth speaking of.” This is scarcely correct of the uncials in general, and it is far from an adequate account of the Manuscript evidence on this Verse in particular, although it is less meagre and strangely wrong than Dr. Liddon’s assertion, that “two cursive Manuscripts of the twelfth century are the first” that have a stop after *σάρκα*.¹ The fact is that of the four most ancient uncials—Aleph, A, B, C—the latter three *have* the stop, leaving the following words to be read as a separate sentence. A is in the British Museum, where it is easily to be seen. It will be found that the Manuscript has not only a stop, but a small space to make room for it, both space and stop evidently *a primâ*

¹ Bampton Lecture, vi. iv. 2, Note u.

manu. B (Vaticanus) I have twice had the opportunity of inspecting, having obtained access to the Manuscript mainly for the purpose of looking at this passage. There is a stop, but no space. This has never been noted, so far as I am aware, in the critical editions, nor is the point given in the *facsimile* edition of Vercellone and Cozza. But the stop is there, nevertheless, exactly the same in appearance as that found after the word ἀμην at the end of the Verse. Whether it is from the first hand or not, I do not venture to say. In C (in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, at Paris) there is a space with the little cross which frequently stands for a stop in that Manuscript. In the same library there is another Manuscript, D, of Paul's Epistles (Claromontanus), of the sixth century. In this there is a space after σάρκα, that is to say, the stichometrical line terminates with this word, as though the writer intended the succeeding words to be separately taken—in other words, virtually recognizing the stop. Of Aleph I only know that the *facsimile* published by Tischendorf has no stop; but this is scarcely conclusive against its presence, inasmuch as it may have escaped the editor's notice, as in A and B, of which Tischendorf expressly, but incorrectly, says that they have no stop. Assuming, however, that Aleph is without the point, still it remains true that three, perhaps four (D), of the five oldest and most important uncial Manuscripts contain the stop.¹ This fact, taken along with other evidence for the same conclusion, ought, I submit, to be regarded as settling the question of punctuation. The division (and rendering) of the Verse given by Professor Jowett in his "Epistles of St. Paul" is, therefore, correct. And he, I need scarcely add, has here but followed the example of the most eminent modern authorities, including Winer, Meyer, Lachmann, Davidson, Tischendorf, and many more.

The most recent English Commentator on this Epistle, Dr. Sanday (in Bishop Ellicott's *Commentary*), thus fairly sums up his observations on the question which I have discussed. "Weighing the whole of the arguments against each other, the *data* do not seem to be sufficient to warrant a positive and dogmatic conclusion either way. The application to our Lord appears perhaps a little the more probable of the two. More than this cannot be said." I venture to ask, Can even so much as this be said, with a due regard to all the foregoing considerations?

G. VANCE SMITH.

¹ Tischendorf notes also L and some cursives.

I think that any one who will look back to my brief remarks on Romans ix. 5, will see that I did not speak at all so dogmatically or confidently as Dr. Vance Smith's criticism seems to imply; nor can I see that he at all shakes what I said.

1. I said that I believed the view of our English Version to be correct "because it is the most natural way of taking the words." To this Dr. Vance Smith makes a theological objection which I had myself anticipated. But the whole context shews that I was only referring to the most natural *order of the words, and congruity with the context.*

a. As to the *order of the words*, let the reader judge. If the view of the English Version be right, the passage runs—"Who are Israelites, whose is the adoption, and the Shechinah, and the covenants," &c.; . . . "whose are the fathers, and of whom is the Christ after the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Not as though the word of God had failed."

If Dr. V. Smith and the authorities which he follows be right, the passage runs—"Who are Israelites," &c.; . . . "of whom is the Christ after the flesh. God over all is blessed for ever. Not as though the word of God had failed."

Why this abrupt doxology at the very threshold of the argument, bursting into praise in the midst of a most sad argument, "changing an elegy into a hymn"? Why the perfectly superfluous *ὡν*, unless the reference be to Him who has just been mentioned?

β. *As to the context*, does not the express limitation, "Christ *after the flesh*," naturally lead to the antithesis which recognizes his Divine nature?

But Dr. Smith makes three objections. (1) St. Paul never applies *θεός* to Christ, unless he does so here, and in Titus ii. 13, which is also disputed.

On this point Dr. Smith will see some remarks in my next paper, written before I saw his objection. Supposing his objection to pass unchallenged, we assert quite fearlessly that our Lord's full Divinity is found implicitly and explicitly asserted in every single Epistle of St. Paul, as well as writ large in the Epistles of the Second Imprisonment and the Pastoral Epistles. With 1 Thessalonians iii. 11; Philippians ii. 6; Colossians i. 15; ii. 9; 1 Corinthians iv. 4-6; 2 Corinthians xiii. 14; Ephesians v. 27, &c., before us, who can have one moment's doubt that St. Paul would hesitate to speak of Christ as God?

(2) But *εὐλογητός* is never applied to Christ, only to God.

Why should not Christ be called "blessed"? Why should such a *ἡπαξ λεγόμενον* be rejected on this ground, any more than the *ἡπαξ λεγόμενον* "spirit of Jesus," which is now all but universally received in Acts xvi. 7?

(3) But Christ is here called "God *over all*."

Why not? Is not "*over all*" the conception of Isaiah ix. 7; Daniel vii. 13, 14; Matthew xxviii. 18; Ephesians i. 20-23; 1 Peter iii. 22; Hebrews i. 8, &c.? The verse is probably an allusion to Psalm lxxviii. 19 (LXX.): *and if in Ephesians iv. 8 St. Paul quotes the previous verse of this Psalm and applies it to Christ*, does it not at once become probable that he refers *this* verse to Christ also? If so, the "*over all*" is at once accounted for by the reference to the rebels in the Psalmist's words. It is in fact an express allusion to the *unbelieving Jews*. So far from telling against the application to Christ, the addition "*over all*" distinctly favours it.

2. I said that the clause was applied to Christ by the early Church.

Dr. Smith says that this "requires qualification." I did not say that it was so applied by *every single writer* of the early Church; but it is so applied by St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Cyril, St. Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, St. Cyprian, Epiphanius, St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, Ecumenius, St. Augustine, St. Hilary, and Novatian. Bishop Wordsworth—a very high patristic authority—says that "*the entire body of ancient interpreters agree in applying these words to Christ*." Tholuck says that *the early writers all favoured it*, with the single exception of Theodore of Mopsuestia, but it is not certain that even he is an exception, and Tischendorf seems to have been misled by Wetstein. Meyer, who takes Dr. Smith's view, says, "*So keine Väter*."

When Dr. Smith says that the authority of the Fathers is not *decisive*, he says what every one, of course, admits.

3. Dr. Smith admits that in New Testament doxologies *εὐλογητός* is never found in the beginning of a sentence, as it is here: but he says that such "doxologies" may be found in the LXX. Here, then, he claims in his own doctrinal favour a New Testament *ἡπαξ λεγόμενον* which in his first argument he rejects. And when he speaks of "doxologies" in the LXX., are there more than the one in Psalm lxxviii. 19, a passage which (as we have seen) St. Paul directly refers to Christ? The position of *εὐλογητός* in Romans i. 25; 2 Corinthians xi. 31, in no wise helps him; and Socinus was so struck with

* Passages where the verb is supplied are beside the point. In thirty passages of the LXX. *εὐλογητός* stands first.

the fact *that in doxologies εὐλογητός normally precedes Θεός*, as to be forced, with true candour, to change his view of the passage. Moreover, Dr. Smith's reference to Romans i. 25 ; 2 Corinthians xi. 31, goes against him, for in those passages St. Paul does indeed call God εὐλογητός εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, but he never adds εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας in *doxologies*, unless he does so in this passage. The exceptional addition perhaps emphasizes the exceptional application.

4. Dr. Smith says it is "scarcely correct" to say that "in most uncials there is no punctuation worth speaking of." All that I meant by this was that the punctuation of the uncials is exceedingly simple, and in many instances of dubious authenticity ; that in $\aleph$ the single point for punctuation is often absent for pages together ; that in A, B, C, the only punctuation is a single point, and in B it has been doubted whether it is ever *primâ manu* ; that in F, Δ , G, N, &c., the points are often omitted ; and that it must often be exceedingly uncertain whether the punctuation is original or subsequently added.

These facts will, I think, be found to be sufficiently attested, though I have never studied the uncials personally. Tischendorf says : "Antiquissimi codices . . . eo rarius solent interpuncti esse quo sunt vetustiores."

As for the uncials in this passage, I followed the authority of Tischendorf and others, who imply that there is no stop at κατὰ σάρκα in $\aleph$, A, B, &c. Dr. Smith says that A has a stop, "evidently" (?) *a primâ manu* ; that B has a stop, though he cannot pretend to say that it is original ; and that there is a little space after σάρκα at the end of a line in D (which does not seem to me very important). But even accepting these conclusions (which in the teeth of patristic evidence it is difficult to do) as a proof that the doxological view of the verse was very early accepted, they do not, I think, counterbalance the weight of the arguments on the other side.

Lastly, I had come to the very same conclusion as that which Dr. Smith approves in Dr. Sanday, only that I had said that I personally believed the reference of the clause to be to Christ, while Dr. Sanday says that "the application to our Lord appears perhaps a little the more probable of the two."

F. W. FARRAR.

I have been asked to offer some remarks on Dr. Smith's "Note," and I do so, though I am not sure that there is very much for me to say. The particulars which Dr. Vance Smith adduces as to the punctuation of the four great uncials are interesting, but add quite infinite-

simally to the weight of the reasoning on the side for which they are quoted. There seems to be a general consent of the best authorities on these matters that very few of the stops in the three oldest MSS., the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Codex Ephraemi, were inserted by the original scribe. In regard to B, the most important of these, there is a presumption from what Dr. Vance Smith says that it was not originally intended to place any stop after *σὺνκα*. It is the custom of the writer of this MS. to leave a slight break at the end of a sentence, and from the fact of his not having done so in this instance, it would be fair to infer that he did not suppose the sentence to be finished. It would need, however, something more than a second-hand acquaintance with the MS., which is all that I possess, to know what degree of probability is to be attached to this point. Tischendorf is such a careful observer, that I should imagine his statement respecting Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus not to be based upon a mistake, but to be intended (*sub silentio*) to be taken as referring to the first hand. He makes indeed the same statement in regard to A, where it would conflict directly with what has been observed by Dr. Vance Smith. How to reconcile the two statements I do not know, as I am not in a position to test the accuracy of either personally. It may only be worth noting that Tischendorf is quoting evidence *against* the view which he himself holds, which is the same as that maintained by Dr. Vance Smith.

However these points may be, Dr. Vance Smith has cut the ground away from under his own feet when he endeavours to rest an argument upon them. It is important to remember that the evidence of the MSS. in matters of punctuation, *where it represents a tradition at all, represents a much younger and less authoritative tradition than in regard to the text*. There can hardly be a doubt that the apostolic autographs were written *entirely without* punctuation or division of any kind. If then the presence of a stop can be traced up as far back as the fourth century A.D. (which in the present case is very doubtful), even then it will rest not by any means upon a primitive tradition, but only upon the opinion of a nameless scribe, and the value of that opinion Dr. Vance Smith's own remarks tend to reduce quite to a minimum. In the first place it would be strange if, as it would seem that we were intended to suppose, the great majority of patristic writers were on one side and the majority of scribes (whose works those writers used) were upon the other. But, waiving this, if the evidence of the Fathers is, as Dr. Vance Smith thinks, worth but little, that of the scribes must surely be worth still less. Dr.

Vance Smith seems to me to put too low an estimate upon the opinion of the ancient Greek commentators. No doubt they are at times uncritical, but it is often much more remarkable how finely critical they are. They knew at least what was natural, and in accordance with the idiom of the language which they themselves habitually spoke. But if the opinion of Origen, Athanasius, Theodoret, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa may be safely "disregarded," what shall we say to that of the scribes? The two classes of evidence are precisely the same in kind, whilst that of the Commentators is immensely superior in degree. While I think, then, that Dr. Vance Smith has much underrated the great preponderance of patristic authority, I cannot see that the evidence which he has adduced as turning the scale in his favour is entitled to receive from him any real weight at all.

I hope I shall not be thought to be speaking invidiously—because I am speaking of one whom I am glad to acknowledge as my own superior on ground that I have trodden myself—when I say that more cogent reasoning in favour of Dr. Vance Smith's conclusion is to be found in a work that has only recently come under my notice, "A Commentary on the Romans," by Mr. J. A. Beet (Hodder and Stoughton, 1877). I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to recommend it to readers of *THE EXPOSITOR*. In spite of its unscholarly appearance (some Greek words accented, but the great majority without either accent or breathing, and the unpleasant effect of this enhanced by an unusual and tiresome system of abbreviation), and in spite of a dry and unattractive style, the work will be found to be that of a really sound, able, and original scholar, who has evidently thought much and worked long at St. Paul's Epistles. It is remarkably independent and impartial in weighing disputed passages like the above, and does so by the strict rules of philological science. It may be worth while to note in passing that Mr. Beet is corrected by Dr. Vance Smith, as he might have been by Tischendorf, in saying that the interpretation which he himself adopts "is found in *none* of the Fathers." I may also add that I cannot quite agree with Mr. Beet in the precise nature of his estimate of the value of the patristic writings on p. 262. Nor, in fact, can I be convinced by the arguments on either side that the passage is one on which it is possible to have a very strong and decided opinion. There is much to be said on both sides, but nothing quite conclusive. W. SANDAY.

When so accomplished and eminent a scholar as Dr. Vance Smith asked me whether I cared to have "the whole truth" concerning Romans ix. 5 placed before the readers of *THE EXPOSITOR*, and assured me that he was in possession of some "facts" relating to it "not known to the theological public," I could only respond to the challenge by saying that, since "the whole truth" was what we all desired, I should be delighted to lay any facts he had discovered before the readers of this Magazine.

At the same time I thought it would conduce to edification, and might bring out "the whole case" more completely, if I asked Canon Farrar, whose conclusion Dr. Vance Smith contested, and Dr. Sanday, whom he had referred to with much respect, to read his "Note," and to append to it their judgment of his facts and pleas. They have been good enough to respond to my invitation. And I have now the pleasure of presenting to the public both the "facts" discovered by Dr. Smith and the comments on them of Canon Farrar and Dr. Sanday. I trust and believe that if not "the whole truth" concerning this much-disputed passage, at least the means of arriving at as much of truth and certainty as can yet be reached, are now placed before the readers of this Magazine. Nor have I much doubt which way their vote will be cast.

EDITOR.

BRIEF NOTICES.

A COMMENTARY ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. *By Joseph Agar Beet.* (London: Hodder and Stoughton.) It is long since we had the pleasure of welcoming the advent of a new and young expositor of such high promise as Mr. Beet. This one work, which we understand to be his first, is of itself, despite certain very obvious drawbacks, sufficient to give him a place in the front rank of Biblical Commentators. Of his scholarship Dr. Sanday, a most competent and impartial judge, has spoken in the present number of this Magazine (see p. 404), and that in terms which render further comment on it unnecessary. His capacity for hard, close, original thinking, is apparent on every page. Nor does he lack the power of eloquent and fervent expression where he cares to use it, as we hope to shew in at least one brief quotation. His interpretations of the great critical passages in the Epistle prove him to belong theologically to the broad Evangelical School; not to the broadest section of that

School, however, for he sometimes fails to put the widest interpretation on St. Paul's words which they will bear, although in dealing with an author of so large and generous a nature as the Apostle of the Gentiles, it is almost always safe to put the largest possible construction on his words. Altogether, it would be difficult to find any Commentary on the Romans so likely to be useful and stimulating to the English reader as this.

But, unhappily, Mr. Beet, either from want of literary tact and practice, or from a desire to economize space and cost by crowding as much as possible into every page, has taken as much pains to disguise the value of his work as most authors take to display and enhance the value of theirs. Not only does he print his Greek—of which, by the way, he gives as little as he can, in order to make his Commentary more widely serviceable—for the most part without accents and breathings; not only does he fling heaps of references into the body of his work, not separating them from the text by so much as a bracket; but he also sprinkles in every page abbreviations more atrocious and irritating than those of a lawyer's letter. "ap." for "Apostle," "ep." for "Epistle," "div." for "division," "arg.t" for "argument," "sp." for "spirit," "bapt.m" for "baptism," "interp." for "interpretation;" "circ.n," "crucif.n," "resur.n," "just.n," for "circumcision," "crucifixion," "resurrection," "justification;" "right.s" for "righteousness," and even "freq. doxx." for "frequent doxologies"—these, with many more, inflict a series of shocks on the delicate nerves of the eye that render it well-nigh impossible to read more than a few pages at a time of a book which otherwise it would be difficult to lay down till the end were reached.

Let no man, however fatigued he may be by tripping over these perpetual stumbling-blocks, suffer himself to be repelled by them: should he persevere, he will be amply rewarded for his pains before he has travelled far. But it would be well if, in future editions, or in future works—for we are happy to say that Mr. Beet has taken *all* St. Paul's Epistles for his province—these detestable abbreviations should be removed. If economy of space and cost has, as we suspect, been Mr. Beet's motive for employing them, he may rest assured that for work so good as his he will find an audience quite willing to pay any fair price; and that, by retaining them, he is likely to alienate the impatient general reader, and to force many an exclamation better avoided to the lips of students, who *must* read him, however tiresome the process may be.

A special and capital feature of this Commentary is that, after a

careful and scholarly exposition of the several paragraphs of the Epistle, Mr. Beet sums up its teaching in a few terse sentences ; and that, at the end of the volume, he devotes a whole essay to the "doctrinal results" he has brought out. From one of his summaries we take our promised extract, selecting that on Chapter i. Verses 1-7, because the readers of this Magazine are being made familiar with the contents of those Verses by Dr. Morison's exposition of "The Christology of St. Paul in the Superscription of his Epistle to the Romans."

"Notice the beauty and symmetry of Paul's opening sentence. It is a crystal arch spanning the gulf between the Jew of Tarsus and the Christians at Rome. Paul begins by giving his name ; he rises to the dignity of his office, and then to the gospel he proclaims. From the gospel he ascends to its great subject, to Him who is Son of David and Son of God. From this summit of his arch he passes on to the apostleship again, and to the nations for whose good he received it. Among these nations he finds the Christians at Rome. He began to build by laying down his own claims ; he finishes by acknowledging theirs. The gulf is spanned. Across the waters of national separation Paul has flung an arch, whose firmly-knit segments are living truths, and whose keystone is the incarnate Son of God. Over this arch he hastens with words of greeting from his Father and their Father, from his Master and their Master.

"Every word increases the writer's claim upon the attention of his readers. He writes to them as one doing the work of the promised Messiah, who lived at Nazareth and died at Jerusalem. Among the servants of Christ he occupies no mean place, but has been solemnly called to the first rank. He has been set apart by God for the proclamation of those joyful tidings whose echoes from afar were heard by the ancient prophets, and still resound in the words of the sacred books. The divine mission of the prophets, and the sacredness of their writings, claim attention for one who announces as present what they foretold as future. This claim is strengthened by mention of Him who is the great matter of the good news. Paul proclaims the advent of a scion of the house to which eternal royalty was promised ; of One who, by Divine power, by victory over the grave, has been separated from all others as the Son of God. This Son of David and Son of God is Paul's Master and theirs. By his personal call Paul has received the rank of an apostle. The office receives lustre from the grandeur of Him by whom it was conferred. The purpose of Paul's mission is that men in all nations may obey faith.

A further purpose is that the name of Christ, written in these verses in characters so splendid, may be revered and loved by all. Among these nations are Paul's readers. But he does not write to lead them to faith. Christ has already made them his own by a divine call. They are objects of God's love, and men whom God has claimed for Himself. Paul desires for them the smile of God, and the rest of spirit which only that smile can give. May it come to them from its only source, the common Father and the common Master !

"In these words there is no mere rambling among sacred topics ; no running away after some great thought ; no mere desire to put Christ's name into every sentence. But there is everywhere order and purpose. In Verse 5 we find Paul standing as an apostle on the level on which he stood in Verse 1. But how great an advance he has made. The long-foretold gospel has given importance to the man set apart to proclaim it. The Apostle has been into the presence of the Son of God, and the glory of that presence now irradiates the office received from One so great. He comes forth as an ambassador, claiming for his Master the allegiance of all nations.

"Observe in this section the facts and teachings assumed by St. Paul. He takes for granted the resurrection of Christ, and his own call by Christ ; that Jesus claimed to be in a special sense the Son of God ; that the prophets spoke from God ; that their writings are sacred books ; and that the gospel is a divine call by which Christ claims men for God."

ZECHARIAH AND HIS PROPHECIES. (Bampton Lecture for 1878.)
By Charles Henry Hamilton Wright, B.D. (London : Hodder and Stoughton.) This elaborate and somewhat heavy work is characterized by sound scholarship, wide erudition, and sober judgment—qualities very necessary in handling the apocalyptic and eschatological visions of Zechariah. The great drawback of the book in its present form is that it is part Lecture and part Commentary. It is to be hoped that in future editions it may become as good in form as it is in substance. In some form it is indispensable to the student of this obscure and difficult Prophet.

EDITOR.

ECCLESIASTES.

CHAPTER i. VERSES I—II.

It is not my intention to lay down anything at the outset with regard to the object or scope of this Book. I shall not even begin by inquiring who was the author of it, or at what period of Jewish history it was written. These are questions of interest, which have been long and eagerly debated, and it can scarcely be said that any of them have been finally settled. There are elements in the problem that, on the one side or on the other, have hardly had full justice done them; and where the bulk of the evidence on which the answers to these questions rests is of an internal kind, turning upon the subject-matter and language of the Book, it is better to suspend our judgment till we have examined the Book itself. This is what I propose to do. I shall not begin with a theory. I shall not state a proposition as to the end and purpose of the Book, and try to prove it. I shall not argue whether it is the work of Solomon or of some later writer. Let the Book speak for itself. It is a very striking and unique specimen of ancient Jewish literature. It is the one attempt made by a Hebrew writer, whose works have been comprised within the Canon, to face the problems of life in a philosophical spirit. It is true this is not done in the manner of a formal treatise. The Jewish mind was naturally averse from speculation. Jewish

literature in its earlier form is wholly wanting in that keen and subtle analysis which is characteristic of the Greek. Jewish thought delights itself in the dramatic incidents of history, and in the strong and passionate forms of poetry, rather than in metaphysical disquisitions or the keen fence of dialectics. It is not till the Jewish mind is brought into close contact with the Greek that it submits to the discipline of form. The Epistle to the Hebrews is the most orderly and systematic of all the Books of the Canon, just because the Jew who wrote it was most distinctly under the influence of Greek culture and philosophy in Alexandria. St. Paul, with all his Greek education, has the fervid irregularity of the Jew. His logic is broken by passion. It does not follow from this that the view of life and of duty presented to us in the Jewish writings is less true or less sure. On the contrary, the poet always sees more than the philosopher; and perhaps there is nothing further from truth than the rigid logic which takes no account of the infinite play of human emotion. A religion or a philosophy which leaves the emotions out of account must always be barren. The heart has its imperative demands in any discussion of the problems of life, of man's destiny and his position towards his Creator, which must be satisfied no less than the claims of the intellect. And a work like that of Qoheleth (or Ecclesiastes), irregular in its form, and making no pretensions to exact thought or logical order, may be of far more service to us in the battle of life than the most logically-arranged treatise, in which all is as cold as it is fair.

At the opening of this Book we might indeed suppose that we were to have the results of the writer's

experience and reflections presented to us in a systematic shape. The various methods by which he had tried to satisfy the longings of his heart are stated in their proper sequence, and we might have expected that the failure in each case would have been traced to its source, and the true remedy supplied. But we find nothing of the kind. We are soon wandering in a labyrinth without any clue to guide us. The Book, we feel, is not, was never intended to be, a philosophical or ethical treatise, or even a religious treatise in the common acceptation of the term. There is nothing of method about it. It does not propose to give a complete solution of all the difficulties of life, or to advise as to all its duties. It is simply the actual record of the struggles, fears, hopes, perplexities, griefs, sins, of a human heart. A man of ripe wisdom and mature experience gives us what may be called the journal of his inner life. He takes us into his confidence. He unclasps the secret volume, and invites us to read it with him. There is that in it which may be of service to us, most of all of service to those who are setting out on the voyage of life, if they will listen to the pilot who offers to guide them. He draws the chart, and marks the sunken reefs and dangerous iron-bound coasts, and the harbours of refuge. He lays before us what he has been, what he has thought and done, what he has seen and felt and suffered; and then he asks us to listen to the judgment which he has deliberately formed on a review of the whole. We have in these "Confessions" the record of a singularly varied experience. The Preacher has had at his command great power and vast wealth; he has surrounded himself with Oriental magnificence and luxury; there is scarcely any pursuit

in which he has not engaged, any mode of life, any form of human enjoyment, with which he has not had some acquaintance. This lends a charm to his Book ; but we have here also what is of far more value—the autobiography of one of the largest hearts God ever gave to man. It is conceivable that the tale of such a man's occupations and pleasures might have palled upon us and disgusted us. But it is not so. The mighty magician touches the secret chords of the human spirit. Heart speaks to heart ; and as we struggle on through the dusty ways of life, footsore and weary of heart, not knowing what shall be the end of the journey, and saying to ourselves, "Who knoweth whether the spirit of man goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast goeth downward to the earth ? one event happeneth to all alike," it is something to hear a friendly voice beside us, saying : Yes, my brother, I, too, have uttered words like these. I, too, have wandered like you in that dark interminable forest, torn by its prickly undergrowth, poisoned by its exhalations, bitten by its deadly reptiles ; but I have come forth into the light of God, a fresh air fans my cheek, the broad ocean of his love stretches in the sunlight before me : and I tell you, as the sum of all my experience, that God and duty abide. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Fear God, and keep his commandments ; for that is the whole of man." Surely that is a right noble creed and a right noble philosophy. But we must not anticipate. The questions which properly belong to the *Introduction* to the Book I wish to reserve for the present. Let us turn to the Book itself.

The First Verse of the First Chapter may be re-

garded as a general title, either prefixed by the author himself, or added subsequently by some scribe.

Chap. i. 1.—*The words of Qohcleth, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.*

A complete discussion of this Verse would plunge us at once into the whole controversy concerning the authorship of the Book ; and this is one of the points which, as I have said, will be better considered hereafter. I may, however, say a few words on the signification of the *nom de plume* which the author has thought fit to employ. *Qohcleth* is not a proper name. It is, strictly speaking, a feminine participle from a root meaning “to gather together,” the noun from the same root being constantly employed to denote “the congregation” or Church of the Old Testament, and finding its equivalent in the ἐκκλησία of the New Testament. Hence *Qohcleth* would mean, strictly, “she who assembles.” The choice of the feminine participle has been accounted for as having a reference to the Hebrew noun “Wisdom,” which is feminine. And then, further, it has been supposed that Wisdom stands here for Solomon, the abstract for the concrete. Thus it is Wisdom personified in Solomon who assembles men to listen to him, and, consequently, who occupies the place of a teacher or preacher. So the LXX. give ὁ ἐκκλησίαστης, and the Græc. Venet. ἡ ἐκκλησιάζουσα, or, as in Chapter xii. 9, ἡ ἐκκλησίαζουσα. And Jerome rightly explains the Greek title by saying that it means one who calls together an assembly, that is a Church ; one whom we may call a preacher (*concionatorem*), because he speaks to the people, and his discourse is addressed, not to an individual in particular, but to the mass in general.

Some of the Rabbis, Rashi for instance, R. Solomon b. Meir, and others, have supposed the name to denote Solomon as a "gatherer of *wisdom*," because he was wiser than all the children of the East. But such an explanation of the participle is not warranted by usage.

Nor, again, can it be said that this is the feminine form which is sometimes employed to denote *office* in Hebrew; for that is always an abstract noun, and it is a feminine participle *active* that we have here, not an abstract noun. The nearest approach to a similar form is in the use of a feminine participle denoting office as the proper name of a man, Sophereth (scribe), in Nehemiah vii. 57; and, with the article, Hassophereth, in Ezra ii. 55. (See, for another instance, Ezra ii. 57.)

For the true analogues to this feminine participle as it is here used we must go to Arabic. There we find feminine forms closely corresponding to this; and the Arabic grammarians tell us that the feminine termination gives to the idea sometimes a collective signification, or serves as "an exhaustive designation of the properties of the genus." For instance, *'allamat* means a very learned man, as uniting in himself all the properties of learned men. The feminine in such a case takes the place of the neuter, as is frequent in Hebrew, and hence we have the notion contained in the word in its most essential form. Qoheleth therefore is, without regard to the gender, a person who preaches, one who concentrates in himself the idea of preaching or teaching.

CHAPTER I. VERSES 2-11.

2. *Vanity of vanities, saith Qoheleth, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.* 3. *What profit hath man of all his travail wherewith he travaileth under the sun?* 4. *One generation goeth, and another cometh, while the earth abideth for ever.* 5. *The sun ariseth, and the*

sun setteth, and parteth (again) to reach his place where he ariseth. 6. The wind goeth to the south, and turneth round to the north; round and round it goeth continually, and the wind returneth to its circuits. 7. All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full: unto the place whence the rivers flow, thither they return in their flow. 8. All things are weary; man cannot utter them., The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is ear filled with hearing. 9. That which hath been is the thing that shall be: and that which hath been done is the thing that shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. 10. If there be anything whereof men say, See, this is new, it hath been long ago, in the ages that were before us. 11. There is no remembrance of them that were before: so likewise for them that shall be hereafter they shall have no remembrance among them that come after them.

I have not arranged the clauses here metrically, for Ecclesiastes is not a poem. No doubt there are in it passages of a strongly poetical colouring, especially at the beginning and towards the close, and impassioned or elevated sentiment falls naturally in Hebrew into a rhythmic cadence. But it is quite a mistake to cast such a book as this into a metrical paraphrase. The parallelism which is of the essence of Hebrew poetry appears here only fitfully and at long intervals. The subject of the writer's meditations, and the deep personal feeling everywhere shewing itself, invest the work with a charm such as is found in the highest poetry; but the diction is that of prose, with but few exceptions.

Verse 2.—"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

This is the wail with which the Book opens; and it is repeated, with melancholy iteration, till the close. It is the cry of a bitter disappointment, the cry wrung from a man who, looking back, sees nothing but a wasted and fruitless life. It is scarcely necessary to say a word of this Hebrew idiom of reduplication, by which the intensest expression of feeling is conveyed:

it has passed so completely into our own language, that we do not suspect it to be of foreign growth. But the word rendered "vanity" deserves a moment's notice. It means, strictly, *a breath, a vapour*, the lightest and most fleeting of things. This is what the world is, this is what it appears to any observer who allows himself to be impressed only by the fleeting evanescent nature of the phenomena which surround him. But the feeling which speaks here is deeper. I have said that I will postpone the full discussion of the question of authorship till we have finished our exposition, only noticing it so far as certain verses (*e.g.*, the twelfth and sixteenth of this Chapter) imperatively require me to do so, in order to their proper interpretation; but meanwhile I may at least assume, what all Commentators admit, that the Book, whether written by Solomon or not, is intended to describe an experience like that of Solomon. It is he whose voice we hear in that exceeding bitter cry, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." None ever entered upon the voyage of life with such prosperous gales; no wiser hand ever steered the barque; none ever made a more fatal shipwreck. We shall see, as we go on, how two aspects of life are presented to us in this Book, how two currents of thought and feeling mingle. We shall listen sometimes to the language of despair, sometimes to that of hope. But the first words that escape from this accomplished man of the world when he sits down to write the tale of his life are expressive of weariness, satiety, dissatisfaction: "All is vanity." All is *not* vanity. But there are moods of bitterness and unrest when the pessimist view of life seems the only natural one, when to read the riddle of the world seems hope-

less, and the utter futility of all human effort is the irresistible conclusion from a survey of the vast tangled web by which we are compassed about.

A man like Solomon, looking back upon his past life, could only look back upon it with shame and bitterness. He had had splendid opportunities. God had given him wisdom, a large heart, great power, great riches. What use had he made of all? His wisdom had been clouded and darkened by passion; he had become despicable in his own eyes, and hated by his subjects. That was the end of all his pomp and splendour, his vast acquisitions, his great public works, his lavish outlay, in a word, his boundless self-gratification.

If, then, we bear in mind that a man is speaking to us here who was not only endowed with singular gifts of mind and heart, but who had a profound sense of religious duty, and who yet had flung himself with ardour into every pursuit and every pleasure, lawful or unlawful, which can attract man, we have the key to those strange utterances of pain and discontent which are so affecting in this Book.

Verse 3.—"What profit hath man of all his travail wherewith he travaileth under the sun?"

These words are the dominant note, so to speak, not only of the Prologue, but of a large part of these "Confessions." "What *profit*?" The word means, exactly, what is over, what remains, what is the net result, of so much toil. It is all fruitless; it leads to nothing. What had he gained by all his experience of life? Nothing but disappointment. Neither he nor others were the better for it. The world is full of changes without result. The world of nature and the

world of man are alike in this, so he thinks, seeing his own bitterness and unrest reflected on all sides. The phrase "under the sun" is frequent in this Book, and is characteristic of it. The Chaldee paraphrast always adds the words "in this world" as explanatory of it, and this is all it means. It is foolish to attach to it some hidden or mystic meaning.

Verse 4. — "One generation goeth and another cometh, while the earth abideth for ever."

This fleeting evanescent character of human life, this come-and-go of the actors in the drama, has always produced its profound impression on all who have asked the meaning and the purpose of life. It is this thought which has given birth to some of the finest passages in the poetry of all nations. It is this thought which lends such infinite pathos to that sublimest of human hymns, the Ninetieth Psalm. It is this thought which has subdued conquerors in the hour of their triumph, and melted them into tears. It is this thought which gives such deep solemnity to the Christian view of life. "The world passeth away." "What is your life but a vapour?" To a man meditating like Qoheleth, feeling bitterly that he had failed to achieve anything durable with all his efforts, it was the uppermost thought in his mind; and it added a tragic pathos to the thought that the earth remained ever the same. You might have thought that if the actors came and went, and the scenes shifted, yet the theatre remaining ever the same, there would be some advance, some progress, some onward movement.

Verses 5-7.—But no! All things move in a circle. Nature herself is a parable of human life. The sun rises and sets and rises again, panting, like some tired racer, to mount the steep ascent, that he may start

afresh on his old course. The wind, the very emblem of fickleness and uncertainty, veers round and round to the same points of the compass, with all its restlessness only "returning to its circuits." The rivers ebb and flow, but they keep always in the same channels. They all empty themselves into the sea, but the sea remains as it was before, and is not sensibly affected by receiving their waters. Everywhere there is the same restlessness, and everywhere the same barren monotony. Everywhere there is labour, but everywhere labour without fruit.

Verses 8-10.—"All things are weary."¹ This is the poetry of the heart. The weary spirit sees its own weariness reflected on all sides. Man interprets nature, reads into it his own unrest and dissatisfaction, and weary, profitless, laborious monotony. All things are burdened, and all faint under their burden. "The eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing." How can the one or the other be satisfied with this stale flat repetition of sameness? Give the eye some new object to rest upon, give the ear some new voice of man or note of bird, or new thought clothed in speech, and you may kindle hope afresh in the weary heart. But "*there is no new thing under the sun.*"² Some youthful dreamer, some not yet dis-

¹ It is surprising that this, the true interpretation of these words, should have been missed. The other rendering, "All *words* are wearisome" (LXX., πάντες οἱ λόγοι ἔγκοποι), which has been adopted by many Commentators, as meaning, "It is wearisome to utter the whole tale," gives a wrong sense to the adjective, which never means "wearying," "causing fatigue," but always "made weary" by labour and fatigue.

² The following striking parallels from classical writers have been adduced :—
 "Nisi forte rebus cunctis inest quidam velut orbis, ut quem ad modum temporum vices, ita morum vertantur." Tacit. *Ann.* ii. 55. Still more strikingly, Seneca says: "Nullius rei finis est, sed in orbem nexa sunt omnia. Omnia transeunt, ut revertantur, nil novi video, nil novi facio." *Epist.* 24. And Marcus Aurelius: πᾶν τὸ γινόμενον οὕτως αἰεὶ ἐγένετο, καὶ γνήσεται, καὶ νῦν πανταχοῦ γίνεται.

illusionated spirit, may come to you and say, "See, this is new ;" but it is only the old story: "It hath been of old time which was before us."

Verse 11.—And then, to add to all, and thus to deepen its mournful solemnity, "there is no remembrance of them that have gone before," and future ages will cherish no remembrance of the present. If there is any one thing which could reconcile man to this strange profitless existence, it would be the hope of being remembered hereafter. It would be something to feel that we have not been quite useless, that the world will be the better for us, and will gratefully acknowledge the debt when we are gone. But even this satisfaction is denied us. Oblivion, with cold finger, draws the curtain upon each act of the drama. How is it possible to hope for any progress? Men do not rise upon the stepping-stones of the past to a higher outlook and a wider grasp and an onward movement. The dreary round continues, and man beats himself against his prison walls in vain if he tries to break out into a purer atmosphere and a higher life.

J. J. STEWART PEROWNE.

CHRIST DEMANDING HATRED.

LUKE xiv. 26.

THIS demand has, at first sight, a strangely stern and harsh aspect, and must have staggered many of those who were now following Jesus. And I have no doubt that the paradox was intended to stagger them, and to arouse them to thought. The crowds now flocking around Christ were attracted by diverse and mixed

motives. Some were there perhaps through mere curiosity, to see what this famous prophet would do or say next. Others were doubtless attracted by his character and teaching; but, even in their case, lower motives might possibly be blended with the higher. Some probably were there, not well knowing why, but just because others were following Jesus; perhaps because their "fathers" or "mothers" or "brothers" or "sisters" were in the crowd. Many, again, were doubtless drawn by purely selfish considerations, imagining that, if they courted this worker of miracles, they would at least secure some material benefits. And then, if He were really the Messiah, to attach themselves to Him would surely bring the greatest advantages to "their own life," and also to their families and friends.

Now, Christ desired to sift this heterogeneous crowd. They ought to know what discipleship implies, and so He will tell them. This mere crowding after Him is not discipleship. They cannot be truly his disciples—they cannot obtain those blessings which He has to bestow—except at a certain "cost." This cost they ought to "count." He would not, indeed, have them to be mere selfish calculators, but neither would He have them to be mere selfish dreamers. He desires enthusiasm, but He desires also thoughtfulness. Surely on a great question like this of attaching themselves to Him, involving as it does such important issues, they ought to be at least as thoughtful as in ordinary matters. A man does not begin to "build a tower" without considering how much it will cost, and whether he has sufficient money to finish it. A king does not engage in battle with another king without first asking

himself whether his army is large enough to give him any chance of victory. If, then, they are wise, they will exercise a similar thoughtfulness; they must not crowd after Him in this reckless inconsiderate way; they must ask themselves whether they are really prepared to become, and to remain, his true followers. And these are his terms: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

We can at once see how this strange demand would be likely to winnow that miscellaneous crowd. All who heard it must have understood Jesus to mean at least this—that his claims were paramount, and in case of conflict were to override the claims of the nearest and dearest relatives. And this of itself was doubtless enough to disgust many in that crowd. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" such words had a kind of magnetic attraction. But the words, "Whoso loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me," would rather exercise on the multitudes a kind of magnetic repulsion. Yet the attraction and repulsion were alike due to the inherent greatness of Christ. It was just because He was the Son of God, able to give rest to all the weary, that He had a right thus to claim the supreme homage and affection of human souls. Still it was a claim which must have sounded strangely to the multitude. Who was this Jesus of Nazareth, forsooth, that He should thus place Himself above even those whom the very Decalogue commanded them to honour? Nor was this all: Jesus uses also that strange word "hate." Hate their "own life"! Why, it was just be-

cause they loved their own life so intensely that many of them were now following Him, in the hope of securing some material benefit. Thus the word "hate" was likely to arrest those who were actuated by frivolous curiosity or by mere selfish expectation. It was a word likely to freeze all inconsiderate enthusiasm. It was a word likely to arouse to earnest thought even those who had been drawn to Jesus by the beauty of his character and the power of his teaching. It was a word, therefore, which was well adapted to sift the crowd. The unspiritual would probably be driven away by it in disgust. Whereas, those who were attached to Jesus in virtue of their spiritual susceptibility, would probably still cling to Him, and wait for his own explanations. The attraction which bound their souls to Him was too strong to be broken by any single word, however unexpected or however inexplicable.

But this paradoxical utterance must have been in some sense a truth, or Christ would not have used it even as a fan. Our Lord was not afraid to utter paradoxes, because He spoke to men as exercising common sense. He educated his disciples to look through the mere letter to the spirit of his utterances. The metaphors and aphorisms of his teaching were all intended for men who think, or who need to be aroused to thought. And so He was not afraid to utter this paradox about "hating" father and mother, because He knew well that the whole spirit of his life and teaching was enough to prevent his disciples from understanding the word in its bare, bald, literal meaning. M. Rénan, indeed, in his "Life of Jesus," speaks of Him as here "trampling under foot everything that is human—blood and love and country;" "despising

the healthy limits of man's nature ;" "abolishing all natural ties ;" and "forgetting the pleasure of living and loving." But we may be sure that Jesus was better understood by the Galilean fishermen than by our learned Frenchman. *They* would not be likely to make any such mistake. However his words might drive away the frivolous and the selfish, those who knew Jesus and had been attracted by his character and teaching must have felt that He could not possibly be demanding that they should, in any absolute or unqualified sense, "hate" their own relatives and friends. M. Rénan can make liberal enough allowance for "Oriental insincerity : " apparently he makes less allowance for Oriental aphorism. But the disciples of Jesus, when they heard these words of his, although they might not know exactly what the words did mean, would know very well what they did not mean. How could their Master intend that they were, literally and absolutely, to hate their friends, when He had Himself exhorted them to love even their enemies ? The whole life and teaching of Christ protest against the notion that He despised the ties of natural relationship. Did *He* trample upon love of country, who Himself wept over doomed Jerusalem ? Did *He* despise the claims of motherhood, who thoughtfully cared for his own mother amid the agony of the Cross ? Did *He* teach men absolutely to hate their brethren, who taught that the spirit of hatred and contempt was the very spirit of murder ? Did *He* bid mothers and fathers literally hate their children, who had Himself taken little children into his arms and blessed them ? To ask these questions is to answer them. And yet we are told that Jesus "boldly preached war against

nature, and total severance from ties of blood," and "demanded" that his disciples "should love Him alone" !

But further, the word "hate" cannot be here a mere hyperbole, meaning that we ought to love our relatives and friends with a diminished affection. Such an interpretation would also be opposed to the teaching of Christ and the genius of Christianity. "Love one another," says Christ, "*as I have loved you.*" "Husbands, love your wives," says the Apostle Paul, "*even as Christ also loved the Church.*" What limits shall we set to affection which is thus inculcated ? Clearly it is the purpose of the gospel to purify and strengthen—not to diminish—all true human love. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God." Jesus might wish his disciples to love their relatives and friends otherwise than they had done before, or He might warn them that their love would not now be able to manifest itself after the same manner as before ; but He could not surely wish that their love should grow absolutely less. If love be really pure and unselfish, it cannot be excessive. We may, indeed, love the Divine Lord too little ; but we cannot love any human being too much. We may sometimes admire a man too much ; or we may trust him too much ; or we may love him, to a certain extent, mistakenly—on grounds which exist merely in our own imagination : but even though he be unworthy, we cannot absolutely love him too much, if only our affection be intelligent, pure, and unselfish. When one friend commits a sin in order to please or to benefit another, the evil does not lie in any excess of true affection, but in a defect of conscience, of will, of godliness. And we shall never love the Divine

Lord more, by merely trying to love our human friends less. The word "hate" here does not mean to love with a diminished affection.

What, then, does it mean? "The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive:" nevertheless, to kill the letter is not the way to reach the spirit. The word "hate" is a strong word, and I believe that it points both to strong feeling and strong action. The words "hate his own life also" are the key to the whole aphorism. A disciple is to hate his relatives and friends in the same sense in which he is to hate himself. In what sense, then, can a man hate himself? He can hate what is mean and base in himself. He can hate his own selfish life. To cling to life is natural; to desire ease and comfort is natural; to gratify the appetites is natural: but all this natural life, whenever it comes into collision with the spiritual side of our being, may be even hated. It is not merely that the Christian may, after a struggle, prefer to remain true to God and Christ, rather than gratify the selfish cravings of his own natural life; he may positively hate these selfish cravings when they are tempting him to forsake his duty. The word may be paradoxical; but is it too strong? Have we never felt disgusted at our own selfishness? Have we never experienced a strong revulsion of feeling when we have been tempted by "our own life"—by our natural liking for what is agreeable to that life—to shirk our duty, and to do something mean and base? In the old Greek drama, Admetos is disgusted with the life which, in selfish cowardice, he has purchased by the sacrifice of his wife Alkestis. And we can well conceive that many a Christian martyr may have felt disgusted with his own life,

when he was tempted to preserve it at the cost of denying his Lord. It is thus, then, that a man may hate himself. Not in the bald literal sense ; for he still cares for his own true best life, and wishes that to be developed and strengthened. But he does, in a sense, hate himself when the self in him rises in rebellion against God and Christ and duty.

Now, in this sense also, a man may hate his relatives and friends. He may hate that in them which is mean and base. He may hate that in them which seeks to drag him away from Christ. He may hate the selfishness lying in their love for him, which leads them to tempt him into sin. He may hate the selfishness lying in his own love for them, which tempts him to disobey God in order to please them, or in order to retain their friendship. Just as he hates all selfish life, so he may hate all selfish love ; and this hatred he may manifest in deliberately choosing to renounce the favour and affection of his friends, rather than recant his allegiance to Christ.

Consider the case of these multitudes who were now following Jesus. They had no conception of the ordeal of suffering which discipleship might involve. They naturally clung to their own life ; but, if they became his disciples, they might be summoned even to die for his sake. Jesus warns them of this possibility. He asks them if they are prepared to make this sacrifice. Are they ready to regard as an enemy that natural love of life which at such a crisis would tempt them to forsake Him ? And in like manner Jesus warns them that, if they become his disciples, the feelings and attitude of their own kindred towards them may altogether change. " I am come to set a man at vari-

ance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law : and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child ; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." Jesus asks them if they are prepared to face such contingencies as these. Are they prepared to see the natural affection of their relatives freezing into an unnatural hatred ? Or are they prepared to steel their own hearts against the entreaties of those relatives who will beseech them to forsake Him ? Are they ready to regard as an enemy that natural affection which at such a crisis would tempt them to violate their spiritual instincts ? Are they ready thus, as it were, to hate their own friends, to turn away even with loathing from all that selfish love which would seduce or drag them from their Lord ?

It is quite possible to be disgusted with those whom we nevertheless still love. When Peter's affection for his Master led him to deprecate the sufferings to which Christ was looking forward—"Be it far from thee, Lord ; this shall not be unto thee!"—Christ's reply was sharp and severe : "Get thee behind me, Satan ; thou art an offence to me ; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men !" And all noble souls experience somewhat of this revulsion of feeling when their friends become their tempters. Our spiritual instincts, if they are healthy, despise that species of affection which can only be purchased or preserved at the cost of desecrating the sanctities of our own nature. When those who ought to encourage us in goodness, and to fortify the citadel of

our virtues, begin to assault that citadel at the gate of affection or friendship, our better nature rises in defence, and barricades the gate. In Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure," we see how a pure-minded sister, who would willingly have died for the brother whom she loves, recoils from him with horror when he beseeches her to save his life at the cost of her own debasement. In George Eliot's "Romola," we see how a noble-minded wife recoils with contempt and scorn from the husband whom she had loved and trusted, when he tries to justify his own selfish baseness, and treats her ideal of duty as a sentimental fancy. And it is not an unusual thing, even in ordinary life, for a Christian to be disgusted with the suggestions and counsels of worldly relatives, and to harden his heart, as it were, against the impulses of natural love, when these would prompt him to violate his conscience in order to gratify or benefit his friends. It is here, I think, that we are to look for the explanation of Christ's demand for hatred: in the positive *revulsion of feeling* with which the faithful soul turns away from the temptations of affection, and in the positive *sacrifice of friendship* which may be involved in allegiance to duty.

Nevertheless the word "hate," being originally and designedly paradoxical, remains of course, under whatever explanations, paradoxical still. No Christian is permitted literally to hate any human being, far less those who are bound to him by natural ties. All love is purified and ennobled by being taken into the keeping of Conscience, and a Christian will not love the less purely or permanently because his affections may have to struggle with spiritual disgusts and antipathies.

Mere natural affection, on the other hand, if it be gratified without regard to moral considerations, becomes corrupted in the process. It is no uncommon thing for an unscrupulous love to pass into an implacable hatred. The man who commits a sin in order to please or benefit a friend, is really drying up the springs of his own best affections. Whereas, the man who, rather than sin against God, is willing to incur the displeasure or even to lose the friendship of those whom he loves, is thereby rendering himself capable of a diviner affection. Many are the evils wrought in the world by over-indulgent and self-indulgent love. The strongest and truest love is that which is capable of the courage and self-sacrifice involved in the infliction of necessary pain. And, therefore, just as he who "hateth his life in this world" really "keeps it unto life eternal," so he who, according to Christ's paradox, "hates" his friends, really loves them with a deeper, more abiding, and more unselfish affection. T. CAMPBELL FINLAYSON.

THE SOLILOQUY OF JOB.

SECOND MONOLOGUE. (CHAPTERS XXIX.—XXXI.)

FROM a purely literary point of view the Second Monologue is even more beautiful than the First. It has, indeed, no passage of such sustained grandeur, none so rich in instruction or so profoundly suggestive, as the disquisition on Wisdom and Understanding in Chapter xxviii.; but for grace and pathos, in charm of picturesque narrative, and pensive, tender, yet self-controlled emotion richly and variously expressed, it may be doubted whether Chapters xxix. and xxxi.

have ever been surpassed, while even their singular power is enhanced by the contrasts supplied in Chapter xxx. He must be dull and hard indeed who can read these Chapters without being touched to the very heart.

Even the style of the Poet changes and softens ; it flows more clearly and composedly than in the First Monologue, though with equal volume and force. "The tender grace of a day that is dead" is in it, and the pathetic regret of the man who mourns his departed day. Its tone is plaintive and elegiac. In form and in substance, indeed, it *is* Job's elegy. "As good as dead already," he sings an elegy over himself, over his broken fortunes and wasted life. He has "become like dust and ashes" (Chap. xxx. 19), the song and by-word of men whom all men disdained (Chap. xxx. 1, 9) ; *he* who was once honoured by those whom all men held in honour ! As he recalls feature after feature of his "golden days," so rich in various forms of good, its manifold dignities and enjoyments take a new value in his eyes. He feels how rare and precious were the felicitous conditions which he once regarded as the common and inevitable trappings of a man of his character and station.

For it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it ; but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then, we rack the value ; then we find
The value that possession would not shew us
Whiles it was ours.

As we study his description of himself, too, we come to understand the man and his conditions better, to form a larger and a clearer conception of him than we could possibly gather from the concise phrases of the Prologue ; and to resent more keenly, as well as to

comprehend why he so keenly resented, the gross and unfounded charges of the Friends. Not only are the contents of the phrase, "A perfect man, and an upright, one that feareth God and escheweth evil," so expanded that we see how much they imply, but the very man himself is brought before us, in his habit, as he lived. We learn that he was the sheikh, not of a nomadic, but of a settled and civilized, clan; that, while he dwelt among his own people, on his own estate, this estate lay in the vicinity of a large well-ordered city, with its several ranks, orders, degrees, in which the public laws were administered with discrimination and equity, and from which, or from the site of which, the clan of Job had driven out the rude and savage aborigines who once possessed the land. We learn that in this well-ordered community Job—a great "lord" on his own estate, and a princely merchant sending out wealthy caravans to distant cities—was the man and statesman in highest repute, the judge most esteemed for an incorruptible integrity and for wise practical benevolence, the observed of all observers, held in reverence by men of every degree, but above all by the poor and needy, who rewarded him for his just and kindly dealings,

Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,
Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor
As fancy values them, but with true prayers,

and the heartfelt blessings of those who were ready to perish. As we read his fond and lingering description of his happy and honourable estate "in months of old," we feel both that Job might well

make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate,

and that "the very stream of his life, and the business he had helmed, must, upon a warranted need, give him a better proclamation" than that we have heard from the Friends.

CHAPTERS XXIX.-XXXI.

CHAP. XXIX. 1.—*Again Job took up his strain and said :*

2. *O that I were as in months of old,*
- As in the days when God kept me,*
3. *When his lamp shone over my head,*
- And by his light I walked through darkness ;*
4. *As I was in my Autumn days,*
- When the favour of God was upon my tent,*
5. *When the Almighty was yet with me,*
- And my children round about me ;*
6. *When my steps were bathed in milk,*
- And the rock poured out for me rivers of oil !*
7. *When I went through the city to the gate,*
- And set up my seat in its spacious arch,*
8. *Then the youths saw me and hid themselves,*
- The old men rose and remained on their feet ;*
9. *Princes hushed themselves to silence*
- And laid their hand on their mouth :*
10. *The voice of the nobles died away,*
- And their tongue clove to the roof of their mouth :*
11. *When the ear heard me then it blessed me,*
- And the eye that saw me bare me witness,*
12. *Because I delivered the distressed who cried out,*
- And the fatherless, and him that had no helper ;*
13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me,*
- And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy ;*
14. *I put on righteousness and it clothed me,*
- My integrity was my robe and my turban :*
15. *I was eyes to the blind,*
- And feet was I to the lame ;*
16. *To the poor I was a father,*
- And I searched into the cause of the stranger ;*
17. *I brake the jaw of the wicked,*
- And plucked the prey from his teeth :*

18. *And I said, "I shall die in my nest,
And shall lengthen out my days like the phoenix ;*
19. *My root is open to the waters,
And the dew lieth all night on my branches ;*
20. *My glory is fresh upon me,
And my bow reneweth its spring in my hand."*
21. *Men gave ear to me, and waited for me,
They silently awaited my counsel ;*
22. *After my words they added no more,
And my speech distilled on them like dew ;*
23. *They waited for me as for the rain,
And opened their mouth as for the harvest showers :*
24. *If I smiled on them, they could not believe it,
Yet did they not suffer the light of my countenance to fall :*
25. *I chose their ways, and sat as chief ;
I sat like a king among a host,
Like one who comforteth the mourners.*

CHAP. XXX. 1.—*But now they that are younger than I mock me,
Whose sires I disdained to rank with the dogs of my flock !*

2. *What to me was the strength of their hands ?
Men who brought nothing to perfection !*
3. *Lean through want and famine,
They gnaw the desert,
The land of darkness, waste and desolate,
Plucking up salt-wort in the thicket
And the roots of the broom for their bread :*
5. *They are driven forth from among men—
Men cry after them as after a thief—
To dwell in the gloomy gorges,
In caves of the earth and rocks ;*
7. *They bray among the thickets,
And huddle together among the bushes :*
8. *Baseborn and base,
They are scourged out of the land.
But now have I become their song,
I am a by-word to them ;*
10. *They loathe me :
They stand aloof from me,
And spare not to spit in my face !*

11. *Because He hath let loose the rein and humbled me,*
 They also cast off the bridle before me;
 12. *A rabble of them riseth on my right to trip up my feet :*
 They cast up their causeways against me;
 13. *They tear up my path,*
 They help on my hurt,—
 They who themselves are helpless !
 14. *They come on as through a wide breach,*
 They sweep up through the ruins :
 15. *Terrors are turned upon me ;*
 They chase mine honour like a storm-blast,
 So that my welfare passeth like a cloud.
16. *And now my soul poureth itself out within me,*
 For days of misery take hold upon me !
 17. *The Night pierceth and rendeth my bones within me,*
 And my torment knoweth no pause ;
 18. *By its great force it is changed into a garment,*
 It girdeth me like the collar of my tunic.
 19. *He hath cast me into the mire,*
 And I have become like dust and ashes.
 20. *I cry to Thee, and Thou answerest me not ;*
 I stand up, and Thou eyest me :
 21. *Thou art changed and become very cruel to me,*
 And dost press me hard with thy strong hand !
 22. *Thou hast caught me up and made me to ride on the blast,*
 And causest me to vanish in the crash of the storm ;
 23. *For I know that Thou wilt bring me to death,*
 To the house of assembly for all living.
 24. *Prayer is vain when He stretcheth forth his hand,*
 When men cry out at his calamity.
 25. *Have not I wept with him whose day was hard ?*
 Hath not my soul been grieved for the needy ?
 26. *Yet when I waited for good there came evil,*
 And darkness when I looked for light !
 27. *My breast boils and is uneasy ;*
 Days of anguish have overtaken me.
 28. *Dark, but not from the heat of the sun, I pass along,*
 I stand up, I cry aloud in the assembly :
 29. *I have become a brother to jackals,*
 And a companion to the ostrich brood :

30. *My skin blackeneth and peebleth off,
 And my bones burn with heat.*
31. *My harp is changed to mourning,
 And my pipe to notes of grief.*

CHAP. XXXI.—I. *I made a covenant with mine eyes :*

- How, then, could I look upon a maiden ?*
2. *What then would have been my portion from God above,
 And what my inheritance from the Almighty on high !*
3. *Doth not calamity overtake the wicked,
 And misfortune them that do evil ?*
4. *Doth not He behold all my ways,
 And count up all my steps ?*
5. *If I have walked with falsehood,
 Or my foot hath hasted after deceit,—*
6. *Let Him weigh me in an even balance,
 And God will know my integrity ;—*
7. *If my step hath turned out of the path,
 And mine heart hath gone after mine eyes,
 And any stain hath stuck to my palms,*
8. *Then let me sow and another eat,
 And let my harvest be rooted up.*
9. *If my heart hath been ensnared by a woman,
 And I have lain in wait at my neighbour's door,*
10. *Then let my wife grind for another,
 And let others enjoy her embraces :*
11. *For this is a great infamy.
 Yea, it is a crime for the judges ;*
12. *It is a fire which eateth down to Abaddon,
 And would have rooted up all my increase.*
13. *If I had despised the cause of my manservant,
 Or of my handmaiden, when they strove with me,*
14. *What then could I have done when God arose,
 And when He visited, what answer could I have made Him ?*
15. *Did not He that made me in the belly make him ?
 Did not One fashion us both in the womb ?*
16. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire,
 And caused the eyes of the widow to pine ;*

17. *If I have eaten my morsel alone,
That the fatherless should not partake thereof :*
18. (*But from my youth hath he gotten up with me as with a father,
And her have I guided from my mother's womb :*)
19. *If I have seen any perish for lack of clothing,
Or the needy destitute of covering,*
20. *And his loins have not blessed me
When warmed by the fleece of my flock :*
21. *If I have shaken my fist at the orphan
When I knew the judges would favour my suit,—*
22. *May my shoulder fall from its socket,
And mine arm be broken at the joint !*
23. *For calamity from God was my dread,
And I could not do it because of his Majesty.*
24. *If I have made gold my hope,
And said to the fine gold, " O thou my trust !"*
25. *If I have exulted that my wealth was great
And that my hand had gotten much ;*
26. *If when I beheld the sun as he shone,
And the moon as she walked in splendour,*
27. *My heart was secretly beguiled,
And my hand kissed my mouth :*
28. (*This, too, were an offence for the judge,
For I should have denied God above :*)
29. *If I have rejoiced in the adversity of him that hated me,
Or exulted when evil found him out :*
30. (*Nay, I did not suffer my mouth to sin
By invoking a curse on his life :*)
31. *If the men of my tent have not exclaimed,
" Who is there that is not sated with his viands ?"*
32. (*The stranger did not lodge in the street,
I opened my door to the wayfarer :*)
33. *If, after the manner of men, I have covered my sin,
Hiding my wickedness in my bosom,*
34. *Because I feared a great assemblage,
And the scorn of the tribes affrighted me,
So that I kept silence, and left not my tent. . . .*
35. *O that I had One who would hear me !—
Here is my signature !—that the Almighty would answer me !
That my Adversary would write out his indictment !*

36. *Would I not carry it on my shoulder,
And bind it about me like a chaplet?*
37. *I would tell him the very number of my steps,
I would draw near Him like a prince!*
38. *If my land hath cried out against me,
Or any of its furrows have wept;*
39. *If I have eaten its fruit without payment,
Or have caused its owners to sigh out their life:*
40. *Let the thistle spring up instead of wheat,
And instead of barley noisome weeds!*
- The pleas of Job are ended.*

Of all his losses, that which touches him most deeply, which therefore he puts in the forefront of his complaint, is the loss of that habitual and intimate communion with God which had been his chief good. This loss he laments again and again in the opening Verses of his Elegy (Chap. xxix. *Verses* 2-5). "O that I were as in months of old!" he cries—in months *of yore*, that is, as the Hebrew indicates, which lie far back in the distant past: so far are they removed from him now that he looks back on them through a blinding mist of grief, now that his eyes are dimmed by that crowning sorrow, "remembering happier things." The happiest he remembers, the sum and origin of all his happiness, is that God was with him, that God's lamp shone over his head, shedding a light on the darkest windings of his path, so that he neither fell nor strayed.

In thinking of the days that are no more,

too, the days that he most fondly recalls are not—and this lends a new touch of pathos to his lament—the days of careless and all-enjoying youth, but the more sober, settled, and steadfastly happy days of his ripe manhood; not the *Spring* days, when he was sowing

his seed, but the golden *Autumn* days (*Verses* 4), when he was beginning to reap the fruit of all the works his hand had wrought, and to get "the profit of all his labour under the sun." *Then*, most of all, in the fruitful and honourable maturity of his life, he felt that his tent stood full in the sun of the Divine favour, and that he was admitted to that sacred fellowship with the Giver of all good which is both life and better than life.

In studying the details of the pathetic description, which commences with *Verses* 6, we must bear in mind, on the one hand, that Job lingers on the details of these happy *Autumn* days mainly because he finds in them tokens and proofs of the goodwill with which God then regarded him; and that, on the other hand, in this description of his past felicity there is a constant sub-reference to his present distress. He never forgets the tempest, the catastrophe, which hurried him at a stroke from the wealth of an early *Autumn* into the cold and poverty of a sudden *Winter*. Even when he does not draw out the contrast, he has it in his thoughts, and is for ever saying to himself—

Then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit; but in one night
A storm
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather.

Remembering this, the *Verses* will go far toward interpreting themselves, so little is there in them to give us pause.

The images of *Verses* 6—milk, or cream, flowing in streams wherever he went, and the rock yielding him oil in lieu of water—are of course common Biblical

metaphors (Comp. Deut. xxxii. 13) for the lavish abundance of his Autumn days, when all nature was at peace with him, and loaded him with its richest gifts.

Verses 7-17 place him before us as a statesman and judge, as chief ruler and magistrate of his clan. When, as Boaz went up to Bethlehem, he left his estate and entered the adjacent city, he was received with the profoundest respect, all classes of the citizens vying with each other to do him honour. As he took his seat in the *broadway*, the spacious chambered recess in the Gate—answering to the Greek *agora* and the Roman *forum*—where public law was administered and public business despatched (*Verse 7*), the young men drew back and “hid themselves” in reverence, as unworthy even to salute a man so great: even the elders of the city rose as they saluted him, and “remained on their feet” till, *primus inter pares*, he sat down among them (*Verse 8*). The very princes “sat still with awful eye,” as if they knew their “soveran lord was by;” while the nobles hushed the loud voices of authority or strife, and sat waiting in attentive silence for his words (*Verses 9, 10*). But while nobles and princes were hushed, the poor and the distressed, all who had suffered wrong or feared oppression, broke forth in his praise, for they knew his tried and unstained integrity, his resolute and considerate benevolence (*Verses 11-13*). Justice, always a rare virtue with Eastern magistrates and potentates, was his delight, and made him the delight of the wronged and defenceless, nay, of the whole clan; insomuch that every ear that heard him blessed him, and every eye that saw him bore witness to him, while those who

had been ready to perish blessed him, and the widow's heart sang for joy. The world has long felt and confessed the charm of this wonderful passage. And *it must be felt*: to expend words on it would be but to mar or weaken it.

That this rare virtue *was* the secret of the favour and reverence in which he was held, he himself tells us in the fine phrase of *Verse 14*: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;" or, "*I put on justice, and it put me on*" (So Gesenius: "Justitia indui, eaque me induit")—a phrase the meaning of which seems to be that, when he assumed the robe of justice, the man was lost in the judge, no private, and much less any corrupt, motive being suffered to influence his decisions. Voluntarily clothing himself with justice as with a garment, justice in its turn clung to him, became habitual to him, a second nature against which he could not sin. So far from having been guilty of the charges alleged against him by Eliphaz (Chap. xxii. 5-9); so far from having taken advantage of his brother's need, stripped the naked, withheld water from the faint and bread from the famishing; so far from sending widows away empty, and breaking the arms of the orphan, and favouring the cause of the strong and insolent, he had won the blessing of the widow and the fatherless; he had been eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and a father to the poor; he had even "*searched*"—expending much thought and labour and pains—into the cause of the alien, who had no claim save that of a common humanity; and he had smitten down insolent wickedness, and snatched its prey—the poor man's heritage—from its teeth (*Verses 15-17*).

Of a life so unsullied, illustrated and distinguished by a justice and beneficence so rare, it was no marvel that this honoured magistrate, this incorruptible judge, foreboded no evil, assumed that to-morrow would be as to-day, and even more abundant than to-day. Was not God with him, and for him? Was not the fear of the Lord the secret and inspiration of his justice? Why, then, should God desert him? With a conscience void of offence, why should he fear that God would desert him? So far from tormenting himself with any such fear, he had said within himself, "I shall die in the warm spacious nest which God has given me; and even death is far off."

If, however, our translation of it be correct, there is a curious metaphor in *Verse 18*: "I said I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days *like the phoenix*." The Authorized Version reads, "I shall multiply my days *like the sand*." And the Hebrew substantive, strange to say, will admit of either rendering, as in the original manuscripts the difference between the two meanings is indicated simply by a "jot" or dot. In the Babylonian copies the word is so pointed as to signify "phoenix," while in the Palestinian MSS. it is so pointed as to signify "sand." The only arguments, so far as I am aware, in favour of reading "sand" are these: (1) that the computation of the vast total of atoms—or "grains of sand," as the phrase then was—of which the world is composed was a favourite problem with the thinkers of antiquity; and (2) that in the Bible "the sands upon the seashore" is a common emblem of a vast and interminable number. Neither of these reasons carry much weight: the first can hardly, indeed, be called a reason at all; while the second loses its force directly we remember that the

Book of Job, though *in* the Hebrew Scriptures, is hardly *of* them, but holds a place apart. On the other hand, the common objection to the "phœnix" reading, that the phœnix is a purely fabulous bird, and that therefore no allusion to it is likely to be made in Holy Scripture, will hardly bear examination. For (1) we shall find that more than one fabulous creature, or, at the lowest, creatures so exaggerated as to become fabulous, are described in the closing Chapters of this very Poem. (2) The legend of the phœnix had a special vogue in Egypt, with which, as we have seen, our Poet had a close and intimate acquaintance; and in Arabia, with which he was connected by blood. (3) The legend found its way into ancient Hebrew tradition, which affirms the phœnix to be the most favoured of all creatures, because, when Eve offered the forbidden fruit to them all, the phœnix alone refused to eat of it; or, again, because, when Noah fed the creatures in the Ark, the phœnix alone sat still and mute, instead of clamouring for its food, that it might give the tasked and busy patriarch as little trouble as possible.¹ Nor does it seem reasonable to conclude that, while our Lord constantly illustrated "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" by parables of fictitious persons and events, no inspired writer could have been suffered to draw an illustration from a fictitious and apocryphal bird. And (5) in the Verse itself there is one very strong reason why we should prefer this rendering: viz., that it falls in with and completes the figure—that it puts a bird into the nest—of the previous line:

I said, "I shall die in my *nest*,
And multiply my days like *the phœnix*."

¹ For the authorities for these traditions see Delitzsch *in loco*.

On these grounds most recent Commentators accept the rendering, and make Job, in his happy forecast of many days and much good, allude to the fabulous bird which, for its courtesy to Noah, received, according to the Hebrew legend, the gift of immortality, and, according to the Egyptian legend, lived for a thousand years, and then, setting fire to its nest, renewed its youth in the funeral pyre.

With *Verse 19* the figure changes, and we see the righteous man like as a tree planted by ever-flowing rivulets, and refreshed by the dew that lies all night on its branches, whose leaf withers not, whose fruit fails not. It was Job's hope that he might resemble such a tree as this, and that whatsoever he did would continue to prosper.

With *Verse 20* the figure changes again. And now he tells us he had trusted that his "glory," all that made life bright and honourable to him, would abide in undiminished splendour; and that his manly vigour, his power to defend and enjoy his "glory," would remain unimpaired, like the unstrung "bow," which renewed its strength and elasticity in his hand.

With *Verse 21* he passes from the bright hopes bred in him by his happy conditions, and resumes his autobiographical sketch, dwelling once more, in order to prepare us for the contrast of Chapter xxx., on the profound and loyal reverence in which he had been held by men of every degree. With patient and silent deference, he tells us, they waited for his counsel, or his decision, in their debates and disputes; his words being sweet and fruitful to them as morning-dew or summer-showers; his words being as final and decisive

as they were welcome, since, when *he* had spoken, they added no after-words to his (*Verses* 21–23). If he smiled on, or toward, any of them, they could hardly be persuaded that the condescension was intended for them; and yet, despite their bashful incredulity, they took good heed to intercept the smile, to catch it up and appropriate it, before it reached the ground (*Verse* 24).

The blending of kindness and authority in the two figures of *Verse* 25—the king and the comforter—is obvious; but to feel the propriety of the phrase, “*I sat . . . like one who comforteth the mourners,*” we must remember that among the Arabs, as among the Jews, the friend who assumed the office of “comforter” occupied a raised seat, while the mourners crouched on the ground around him.

Taken as a whole, the Chapter indicates a simple and primitive organization of the aristocratic type, not unlike that which we find in Homer, but in full accordance with the deference to pure descent and noble birth which has always characterized the Arab race; while it also denotes a social condition much more complex and advanced, and in form much more civic and municipal, than we commonly associate with the habits of that race, although a tolerably exact parallel to it may still be found in the large and populous cities of Central Arabia.

As we pass to the opening Verses of *Chapter xxx.*, we may well ask :—

What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't ?

They *are* men, but men "whom the vile blows and buffets of the world " had made vile, and " so incensed, that they were reckless what they did to spite the world ; " men

So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That they would set their life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on't.

From the earliest times Commentators have agreed that we have in Verses 1-15 a graphic sketch of an abject troglodyte race, driven by superior force to take shelter in dens and caves of the earth. But Ewald was the first to suggest that these troglodytes were *the aborigines* of the Hauran, who had been invaded, conquered, and dispossessed by the superior race among whom Job sat as chief. " The men of whom Job here complains," says Ewald, " were the aboriginal inhabitants of these regions, who had long before been subjugated by the race to which Job's family belonged, and were reduced at length to such degradation, that those who would not be enslaved fled to the wilds and the natural coverts of the land, where they led a stunted and miserable life ; and who, whenever they ventured near in quest of relief, were driven forth from society with abhorrence, as worthless despicable creatures." The suggestion was so happy, and tallies so exactly with all the details of these Verses, that it is now generally and gratefully adopted.

Dispossessed, despised, and despicable aborigines such as these are to be found in every region of the East. We are having our own troubles with them to-day in the lofty passes and branching valleys of the great mountain-range which separates Hindostan from Afghanistan : we find them, indeed, a constant trouble

and peril in all the border-districts of India. As a rule, these aboriginal races are of an inferior strain and stature to the races that have conquered them and seized their ancient haunts; they are commonly driven to take refuge in the hills, while their conquerors settle on the well-watered fruitful plains; their language is rude and harsh, and often a differentiated strain, speaking a different tongue, may be found in the adjacent valleys of the same great mountain-range. Aliens in form, aspect, language, customs, complexion, incapable of any settled industry, robbers by necessity as well as by choice, repulsive in appearance, fierce and intractable in temper, they are at once feared, hated, and scorned by the more civilized races who have displaced them.

All these features, common to many tribes, come out in the vagabond and villainous, but most miserable, race—base by birth and base by habit (Verse 8)—depicted by Job in Verses 1-15. But why does he depict them so carefully? Why does he break off from the exquisite and flowing description of his Autumn days in order to depict them? Mainly, no doubt, to enhance the effect of his description by force of contrast; to paint in the dark background against which the figure of the upright judge and beloved philanthropist will stand out more distinctly. The position and public esteem he once, and long, enjoyed, will impress us the more deeply if we see him for a moment as he lies on the *mezbele*, and learn how

all indign and base adversities
Make head against his estimation;

how utter and miserable a change has passed upon him.

And surely nothing could feelingly persuade us of that change if the contrast he now dashes in does not. Once, the young men of his own tribe, even though they were nobles or princes of the tribe, had drawn back in reverence, as unworthy of his salute; but now "they that are younger" than he, lost to the immemorial respect for age, make him their derision, even though they be the sons of "sires whom he had disdained to rank with the dogs who watched his flocks" (*Verse 1*), sons of the miserable outcasts who, for lack of steadfast purpose and settled industry, could do nothing well (*Verse 2*), nor even be trusted as men trust a dog. If there is a tone of contempt in these Verses, we must not therefore assume that Job had never looked with an eye of pity on the abject and irreclaimable outcasts who now made him their mock; for these, too, were among the perishing and helpless whom he had habitually befriended (Chap. xxix. 12, 13) and delivered. From Chapter xxiv. Verses 4-8, we learn that he had often brooded over their miserable fate; that their misery had been a prominent factor in that standing problem of the Divine Providence which had engaged and engrossed his thoughts; that he had often wondered why, under the rule of a God both just and kind, any race or class of men should have been condemned to conditions so hopeless and degrading; that he had even resented the misery and oppression to which they were exposed. And from *Verse 3* onwards, after this brief touch of contempt provoked by their unprovoked insults, his description of them blends many strokes of pity and compassion with his natural resentment of their insolence and malignity. It is "want" that makes them lean and pithless; it is

“famine” that drives them to “gnaw the desert,” as if they were brutes rather than men, and to snatch from it a scanty and innutritious sustenance ; it is

For fear that day should look their shames upon,
that

They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night,

in “the land of darkness, waste and desolate,” hiding themselves in the secret places of the earth, in the shadows of the hills, in the caves of the rock, in “rough caves cut out in the precipitous sides of nullahs, or dried-up watercourses.”¹ Here, in the hills and on the steppe, they are driven, for lack of better food, to browse on the buds and young leaves of the “sea-purslain,” or “salt-wort,” a shrub which still grows both in the desert and on the sea-coast, and is still eaten by the abject poor of the East ; and to devour the bitter but edible root of “the broom,” or *genista*, as the Indians of Florida do to this day (*Verses* 3, 4).

The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious,

even things so vile as these.

If, moreover, weary of their hard lot, they venture near the cities or estates of civilized men, these miserable pilferers are instantly driven back to the gorges and caves from which they emerged ; men shout after them as after thieves, which in very deed they are (*Verses* 5, 6). Their very language is an offence to

¹ The village of Ragha Migana, among the Afghan hills, is described as consisting of such “caves” in the “Daily News” of the very day (March 11, 1879) on which these sentences were written.

civilized ears, as the language of most savage races, with its growling gutturals and sharp clicks, commonly is. Herodotus compares that of the troglodyte Ethiopians to the screech of the night-owl, just as Job compares that of the troglodytes of the Hauran to the "bray" of the ass (*Verse 7*). Their customs, of which Job marks one, are no less offensive, no less sure to disgust all cleanly livers; they "huddle together in heaps among the bushes," without distinction of age or sex, seeking a miserable warmth by close contact with each other. With so much to disgust and repel a race like that of Job, singularly cleanly in its habits, singularly proud of the purity of its blood and of the soft picturesque beauty of its language, what wonder that these abject creatures, "baseborn and base," should be scourged out of the land so often as they ventured to set foot within it (*Verse 8*)?

Yet even these miserable wretches, whom he regards with a strange yet natural mixture of compassion and aversion, now turn against Job, and make *him* their by-word, loading him with the most extreme and filthy insults (*Verses 9, 10*)! Because God has let loose his anger against him, they also throw off all restraint, all fear, all decency even (*Verse 11*). This allusion to God as the real author of all his woe and shame is a quiet stroke of art, preparing the way for the second section of this Chapter (*Verses 16-31*), in which Job makes his last appeal against the apparent injustice and cruelty of the Almighty. But, for the present, his mind is mainly occupied with the cruel injustice of man, of those who, though they wore the form of man, he could hardly deem worthy of the name. His soul is exceeding filled with the contempt,

not of the proud—that were a less intolerable fate—but with the contempt of the abject and contemptible. As he broods over their dastardly and unprovoked insolence, his imagination stirs and works, till their insolent enmity presents itself to him under the form of a military siege.

In his time, and for many a long century after, those who attacked a walled city threw up a military “causeway” before it. Commencing at a distance from the walls, and sheltering themselves under cover of their shields and tortoises, they gradually built up a broad slope to the level, or nearly to the level, of the lofty wall. Along this slope, when it was complete, the troops advanced to the assault, clambering over the wall when they reached it, or, if it were still too high, battering it down with their beetles and rams. This is the image elaborated in *Verses* 12–15. The horde or rabble of outcasts, who were themselves helpless, advanced against him, who, like them, had no helper; the sense of their own destitution breeding no ruth in them, but rather inflaming their cupidity and insolence. “They cast up their causeways” against him; they make breach on breach in the wall; they sweep up through the ruins which they themselves have made; and, as he flees in terror from the irresistible attack, they chase him from street to street like a blast. All refuge is closed against him, all hope of escape taken away; so that his “welfare” vanishes like an unsubstantial and passing cloud.

Of course we must not take all this literally. It is but a figure, but it is a figure which shews how deeply Job had been wounded by the insolence of men who but a little while since would not have dared to brook his mere glance.

At this point Job passes from the anguish caused him by the spurns and insults of the aboriginal hordes, to dwell once more on the foul and piercing torment of his loathsome disease. And as many critics find Verses 16-31 entirely out of place, and pronounce the tone of despair by which they are pervaded utterly inconsistent with the calm and pensive beauty of this exquisite Elegy, and with the convictions and hopes to which he had now attained (*Cf.* Chap. xix. 23-27), it is necessary that we should briefly consider what force there may be in this suggestion. But little force will be left in it, I submit, when the following considerations have been duly weighed.

1. If the power of this Elegy was to be enhanced by an explicit, as well as an implicit, contrast between Job's former happiness and present misery, it was but natural that, as he brooded over the insults of the "baseborn and base," and the foul torment of his terrible leprosy, he should once more appeal against the hard injustice of his doom.

2. The presence and favour of God, which he so fondly recalls, had been the sum and crown of his felicity in the happy Autumn days which he "prizes to their worth" now that they are gone. How, then, could he fail to bemoan the absence and disfavour of God as the source of all his misery? how fail to feel, and to accentuate, the "change" in Him who, once always with him, would not now so much as answer when he cried to Him, and only eyed him with stern and cruel indifference when he stood up and mutely implored relief (Verses 20, 21)?

3. The very despair of Job reminds us of the real and standing problem of the Book. When he com-

plains that he has no hope but in death, and even longs to die, "that he may look on death no more" (Verse 23), we cannot but remember that this despair of all relief on this side the grave was the very condition of his trial. The charge made against him was that he did not serve God for nought; and how should his pure and disinterested piety be made apparent if all hope that he should be saved were not taken away? On the other hand, the fact that he was persuaded that God had determined "to bring him to death" (Verse 23), and that it was vain to try to turn Him from that purpose (Verse 24), by no means excludes the hope so splendidly and solemnly expressed in Chapter xix.; for that hope was that *by death* he should be saved from death, that even in Hades God would shew him a path of life.

4. And, after all, a careful study of these Verses shews that, on the whole, they are a plaintive lament over a happiness irredeemably and mysteriously lost, rather than a fierce outburst of passionate resentment such as we have often heard from Job before. It is no wild mutiny against the authority of Heaven, no crude and reckless impeachment of the Divine Rule, which meets us here; but, rather, a pathetic complaint of the cruel change in the attitude of God toward him (the "Thou art *changed*" of Verse 21 is the keynote of the whole passage), a change the more cruel because unaccountable and unprovoked. God had been moved against him, as God Himself confesses, "*without cause*;" and any one who will carefully study the Verses (Verses 20-24) in which the effects of this causeless but fatal change are most strongly expressed, and mark how they are led up to, and softened, and

toned down by the Verses which precede and follow them, will feel that, instead of charging God foolishly, Job is bewailing a change of which he can neither give nor hope to give any reasonable account.

This lament over the harsh and inscrutable contrast between the present and the past commences with *Verse 16*, in which he exclaims that, as the days of his misery come back and take hold on him once more, his very soul is poured out within him; *i.e.*, his soul, yielding itself without resistance to the intense pressure of his misery, is, as it were, crushed and dissolved into a mere stream of sorrow. There is no cessation to his pain. It rends him by night as well as by day (*Verse 17*), rends and gnaws his very bones; for the phrase translated, "My *torment* knoweth no pause," means literally, "My *gnawers*"—*i.e.*, my gnawing pains—"sleep not." The word is only used here and in *Verse 3*, and it implies that as the hungry aborigines "gnawed the desert," suffering nothing to escape them, so his cruel pains "gnaw" him. The allusion is, of course, to his foul disease, the *lepra Arabica*, which eats through the flesh, and feeds on the very bones, till the limbs fall off one by one. An Arabian historian, quoted by Wetzstein, says of Job: "God had so visited him that he got *the disease which devours the limbs*, and worms were produced in the wounds, while he lay on a dunghill, and, except his wife, who tended him, no one ventured near him."

Verse 18 is one of the most difficult, though one of the least important, Verses in the Poem. Most Commentators, however, are content to take it as denoting such changes and symptoms of disease in Job's out-

ward form as distorted his very mantle, and made his tunic cleave round his throat as though it would strangle him. The reading is so tame and prosaic at the best, and so nearly borders on the grotesque, that I venture to suggest that Job draws a bold figure from the foul and cleaving incrustations of his leprosy, and represents his very torment as becoming a kind of garment to him. Those who have suffered extreme and long-continued pain know very well how their torment seems to cover them, to cleave to them, and even to yield them a certain foul and miserable warmth. There are moods of pain, though perhaps few men know them, in which no figure would seem more natural and expressive than this :—

By its great force it is changed into a garment,
And girdeth me like the collar of my tunic.

And (*Verse* 19) it is *God* who has sent this cleaving choking torment upon him, which, casting him on the *mezbele*, has reduced him to “dust and ashes,” *i.e.*, brought him down to death.

Verses 20–24 contain that “outburst of despair” which has been thought inconsistent with the calmer tone of Job’s Soliloquy, and with any settled hope of life beyond the grave. But though there is deep pain in the passage, and poignant, or even passionate, regret at the changed and inexplicable posture which God has assumed towards him, I find no wild and reckless “outburst” in it, no bold and insolent impeachment of the Divine Justice; and though there is a settled despair of *life* in it, there is, I think, no such despair of death, or of what death may bring. In *Verse* 20 Job simply asserts what was undeniably true—that if he called on God, God did not answer him; that if he “stood up,”

in mute and meek appeal, hoping that God would "look with an eye of pity on his losses," He did but regard him with cold indifference or stern displeasure—as an offended Eastern monarch might look on a disgraced courtier who stood up in the Divan, humbly reminding his lord of his presence, and suing for some sign of grace; just, indeed, as Saul, when he found that David was accepted in the sight of all the people, "*eyed* David from that day and forward" (1 Sam. xviii. 9). It is this *change* in God that Job accentuates in *Verse 21*. The Friend in whose favour alone he truly lived was turned to be his Foe, pressing him down with the strong hand and outstretched arm which had once been his defence and support; and hence he could say—

O that is gone for which I sought to live,
And therefore now I need not fear to die.

Life being gone—for with him life no longer than God's love would stay, since it depended on that love—there was no hope but in death; and the sooner *that* came the better. It could not but come soon. Caught up by the bitter wind of the Divine displeasure, he must vanish in the crash of the storm (*Verse 22*). The persistent silence of God, his dumb indifference to one on whom he had lavished every mark of grace, shewed that it was his settled purpose to put Job to death, to bring him down to Hades, which—surely not without some latent indication of hope—Job here calls "the house of assembly for all living" (*Verse 23*). Death, says Schiller, is universal, and cannot therefore be an evil; and surely all light, all hope, cannot be excluded from the house into which *all* the living pass at death. If, however, it be the Divine decree that he is to die,

it is vain to appeal against it ; God is not to be moved by the outcries of men from the steadfast purpose of his will : when the word has gone forth out of his mouth, none can turn it back. So, at least, I understand *Verse 24*. But there is an alternative reading which demands consideration. Delitzsch, following Ewald, reads the Verse thus :—

Doth not one, however, stretch forth his hand in falling ?
Doth he not, when being ruined, cry out for help ?

and connects it with the context thus : “ I must soon die. May I not, then, lift up my hand in appeal, and cry out for help before I die ? I who have wept for others, may I not weep for myself ? ” Taken thus, the Verse yields a perfectly good and congruous sense. It is an appeal to the natural instincts and habits of men which justify Job in uttering his lament. But the former rendering carries the greater authority with it, I think, and yields a sense equally good and equally congruous with the general strain of thought.

To the merciful, God shews Himself merciful ; to the unmerciful, without mercy. The cruel change in Him, then, which is the theme of Job’s lament, might be accounted for had Job himself been wanting in sympathy and compassion. But (*Verses 25, 26*) his soul has been habitually “ suffused with the tender hues of charity.” It was because he had been generous and pitiful, as well as just, that he had cherished the hope of dying in his nest, and of renewing his vigour as the unbent bow renewed its spring in his hand. It was because when, on this competent warrant, he looked for good, evil came upon him, and darkness when he looked, and thought he had a right to look, for light, that his heart boiled within him, and he was overtaken

by days of anguish (*Verse 27*). It was not simply the defeat of his hopes, but their unjust defeat, which he resented; it was not simply his misery, but the unreasonableness of his misery—the mystery of it and the iniquity of it—which he mourned.

And that misery was so abject, as well as so inscrutable, that he might well cry out against it (*Verse 28*). Dark, not from the heat of the sun,¹ but from the fatal and corroding heat of his leprosy—which burns up his very bones, and blackens his skin till it falls off from him (*Verse 30*)—he is driven to outcries which he knows to be vain (*Verse 29*); outcries which to the by-standers are harsh and dissonant as those of the ostrich and the jackal, than which nothing can well be more harsh and dolorous. The howl of the jackal is one of the most tormenting discords of an Eastern night; while Dr. Shaw affirms that the ostrich also makes night hideous with the most doleful cries and groans; and Dr. Tristram adds that the cry of the ostrich, which even Hottentots have mistaken for the roar of the lion, sounds more like the hoarse lowing of an ox in pain. One of the Hebrew names for the ostrich means, according to some authorities, “daughter of the loud cry,” while another name for it is undoubtedly derived from a verb which means “to emit a tremulous and stridulous sound.”

This lament over the terrible ravages, and still more terrible moral effects, of his fatal and loathsome disease, closes with a Verse (*Verse 31*) of idyllic beauty and sweetness, which, so far from being out of place, is obviously and conspicuously appropriate, both as de-

¹ For a similar construction see Isa. xxix. 9: “Drunken, but not with wine:” i.e., not with wine, but with the Divine wrath.

noting the more softened tone and plaintive mood into which Job has fallen, and as fitly introducing the sweeter and purer strain of pensive recollection contained in the following Chapter. No careful reader of the Hebrew, or even of the English, can fail to notice the melodious close in which this section of Job's Elegy dies away. The Verse has a tender and a "dying fall." The harp and the pipe are instruments of mirth: and by the words,

My harp is changed to mourning,
And my pipe to notes of grief,

Job at once recalls his delights, and affirms that all his delights are now "converted to their opposites." The festive and joyous music of his life has broken into harsh discords; instead of merry tunes, nothing is to be heard but doleful and dissonant cries. In fine, as in the previous Chapter we have seen him in all the happy wealth and abundance of his Autumn prime, so in this Chapter

That time of year we may in him behold
When yellow leaves, or few, or none, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

S. COX.

A WORD STUDY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.¹

PART II.

IT will be seen from this cursory survey that Greek philosophy was in some respects by its contents an anticipation, in others by its deficiencies a premonition, of the Biblical ethics of "blessedness." Not in *inwardness* shall we find the difference, but rather in the fun-

¹ See *Part I.* of this article in THE EXPOSITOR for May.

damental conditions of that inwardness, its relations, its development, and its possibilities. The philosophers, no less than those to whom a clearer revelation came, were conscious of a "blessedness" surpassing "happiness"¹ (εὐτυχία, "good luck") in its ordinary acceptance. With one accord the nobler schools laid its foundation in moral excellence, not in outward prosperity, nor even in outward prosperity as the result of moral excellence; but defined εὐδαιμονία and μακαριότης (their rarer word) as "well-being," "the good of the soul." Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and even Epicurus, welded virtue and true happiness inseparably together. With them the εὐδαιμονία of the truly wise man was not destroyed by "poverty, need, sickness, or any other adversity."² But they failed to allow for the perversion of the will, the feebleness which does the evil that it would not, the depravity which knows to do good, and does it not. Aristotle, indeed, with a more subtle and practical analysis, recognized the influence of the will upon knowledge and the judgment, the force of practice for the advancement of virtue, and the intimate connection of "rational virtuous activity" with happiness. But he deemed preliminary disposition a necessity, and could see no way out of his ethical circle—"Be virtuous, act virtuously, and you will acquire virtue, and therefore happiness." Dimly groping, he seems in one place, it is true, to descry afar off the possibility of a change of heart. "Men ought to pray," says he, "that absolute goods may be goods relatively to themselves, and they ought to choose

¹ Compare Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*. "There is something higher than happiness, and that is blessedness."

² Compare Plato, *Republic*, x. 613.

those things which are relatively good.”¹ But the groping is dim indeed. Again, the great philosophical schools, and not least the Stoics, grasped the consciousness of man's dignity, and the idea that virtue and happiness were found only in unity with the divine. But the divinity of man remained, in reality, a theory, and the Stoic “grieflessness” and “rational suicide” were only signs, in an extreme form, of that sense of an unconquerable “necessity” of disorder which haunted even Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle with the spectre of the impossible, because they had seen no image of incarnate perfection, and knew not of any transforming power. Without any clear conception of the divine, they could not know exactly in what it differed from the human, and therefore what separated God and man, or what would unite them. Their idea consequently of happiness through harmony with the divine, could not be otherwise than indefinite and unpractical. The object of their desire was harmony rather than holiness—a harmony according to nature or a nature-god, rather than a holiness from penetration with the divine life. Nor is this statement affected by Plato's maxim, that to be “like God” was to be “holy (*ὅσιος*) and just, not without wisdom;”² for the “justice” of this passage must be confined to the social side of the virtue, and the “holiness” (to express which sacred Greek preferred *ἄγιος*, “separate,” rather than *ὅσιος*) hardly covered more than such eternal God-ordained “sanctities” as those contravened by incest,³ perjury,⁴ neglect of the dead,⁵ or such other acts as “no human law could make otherwise than abomin-

¹ *Ethics*, v. 11.² *Theætetus*, 176.³ *Laws*, 285 B.⁴ *Republic*, 203 D.⁵ *Laws*, 878 B.

able," and which the poets, it will be remembered, held to be the ruin of happiness. It did not touch the region of moral purity proper, and, speaking broadly, was never applied to the gods. Humanity laboured under deficiency, weakness, ignorance, which the gods in each instance "winked at," or punished; but was not cursed by *sin* that by its very nature radically and permanently severed man from them. We cannot therefore be surprised that Greek philosophy, identifying as it did the beautiful and the good, allowed its adoration of "harmony" to be mixed with sensual conceptions; and we can understand how evil could be regarded, even by Marcus Aurelius, "the best of the Stoics," with cold resignation, and without a single holy repugnance. So far as holiness was a condition of happiness, the Greek systems were largely a prophecy by defect; and especially so, as they did not exhibit the divine as a power actively "making for righteousness" in the individual, and so leading humanity through the individual, as well as the individual through humanity, to a definite aim. The *δαίμων* ("genius," a being ranking between a god and a man), which Socrates spoke of as his mentor, is the only hint of any such internal operation; but as its work was solely prohibitory and practical, it is a most meagre shadow of the Christian substance. This double lack of God-consciousness was the secret of that despair of humanity which everywhere pervaded philosophy. "There are few that be saved," was the universal cry of the Greek schools. Mankind were not only "mostly fools" (in the language of the Chelsea seer), but were likely so to remain. A small aristocracy of knowledge and virtue were, as the inevitable

result of the philosophical theory, fenced off by an almost insurmountable wall of partition, not merely from women¹ and slaves,² but from the vast majority of their fellow-citizens, and, as a matter of course, from all nations that were outside the Hellenic family. The philosophers did not expect to influence "the multitude" by their teaching,³ least of all to reach the degraded residuum; while, in spite of the fair-seeming cosmopolitan theory of the Stoics, the world beyond Greece was practically beside their calculation. "Debtors" they were to "the Greek," but not to "the barbarian." Not to the alien, not to the "poor was the gospel preached;" not for such as they was the joy in the good of which Aristotle prophetically speaks when he defines happiness as the "rational virtuous activity of the soul;" not for such as they even the joy of *μεγαλοψυχία* (the "highmindedness"), by which the troubles of life were to be despised, and which bade the good man seek such an independence of his fellows that, while he might confer benefits, he was not permitted to receive them.⁴ Nor did the future life hold out any definite hope either to the "wise" or the "unwise." It cannot be positively affirmed that Aristotle had any idea of the soul's immortality. The Stoic's Pantheism taught the final absorption of all personality in the "Soul of the Universe;" and even Plato's doctrine of immortality⁵ is so wrapped in mist, that the happiness of the *earthly personality* in the future world is still left somewhat doubtful.⁶

¹ Plato, *Republic*, v. 455. "In all pursuits the woman is weaker than the man." Compare Aristotle, *Politics*, i. 13, 7-11.

² Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, viii. 11. ³ Ibid. x. 9, 3. ⁴ Ibid. iv. 3.

⁵ *Republic*, x. 109; also *Phædrus*, 245; *Timæus*, 41; *Phædo*, 62-107.

⁶ On this point compare *Meno*, 80, 81.

And thus the vital defect of the philosophical theories of happiness stands before us clearly defined. Speaking broadly, in all the systems of heathen ethics knowledge was the starveling and indifferent substitute for faith and love. We would not say, however, that faith and love are nowhere to be found. A groping faith in the right and in "the God" is the atmosphere of Socrates' defence before the dicasts at Athens. "As I know nothing about [death and] Hades, so I do not pretend to any knowledge; but I do know well that disobedience to one better than myself, whether God or man, is both an evil and a shame: and I will never embrace evil certain, in order to escape evil which, for aught I know, may be a good. I leave it to you and the God to decide as may turn out best for me and for you."¹ There is a vague faith, too, in the noble sentence of Plato near the close of his "Republic:"² "In the case of the just man, we must assume that whether poverty be his lot, or sickness, or any other reputed evil, all will work for his final advantage, either in this life or in the next. For, unquestionably, the gods can never neglect a man who determines to strive earnestly to become just, and by the practice of virtue to grow as much like God as man is permitted to do." The resignation of the Stoic under a universal law, and Aristotle's notion of God as a being in perfect bliss, absorbed in self-meditation, left no room for either providence or prayer. Even at the best the faith was rather a firmness and steadfastness than a vivid belief in a personal, loving, ever-present God, able and ready to help in every time of moral and temporal trouble here, and to crown with unfailling and everlasting holi-

¹ Plato's *Apology*, 28.² Page 613.

ness and glory hereafter. The old idea of happiness lacked this certainty in regard to the present and the future. Neither was love—that lightens all burdens and makes all law-abiding a delight—altogether beyond the horizon of the ancient thought. When Socrates, having given himself up to the education of the Athenian youth, relied upon ἔρως (“love”) as his most efficient helper,¹ the principle was there, though the sensual in idea was not entirely eliminated. In the fable of Diotima, which, in the *Symposium*,² Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates, and which tells how the δαίμων Ἔρως (“the Spirit of Love”) was born of Πόρος (“Plenty”) and Ἀπορία (“Poverty”), he hints at a bond between earth and heaven, and a fellowship of all men one with another. Again, in these *Symposium* discourses³—with sensual metaphors indeed, borrowed from the practice of nameless vices—he speaks of a love of beauty and knowledge which brings to our thoughts the hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and in his *Phædrus* + he calls Ἔρως (“Love”) a πτεροφύτωρ (“one that makes wings to grow”); telling how these wings are the corporeal element akin to the divine, and how they are “budded” by love, and nurtured by beauty, goodness, and the like; so that in the end the possessor (who is the philosopher, and none else) can soar beyond all the mere appearances of things, until he gazes upon the “ideas” of justice, temperance, and knowledge, and thus attains communion with and likeness to the divine. And to this same end tends that “philosophical love,” or joint striving of two souls in pursuit of pure knowledge

¹ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, ii. 6, 29.

² Plato, *Symposium*, 203.

³ Ibid. 211, 212.

⁴ *Phædrus*, 246, 248, 249.

and harmony, "the food of the divine."¹ The lovers spur on the beloved by "the greatest of heaven's blessings, the madness of love," "drawing inspiration from having gazed intensely upon their [chosen] God [be it Zeus, Ares, or any other god, who is their ideal], their recollection clinging to him, and they themselves becoming possessed of him, and receiving his character and ways, as far as man can participate in God."² Here we have a certain premonition of the aim and end of Christian fellowship. Similarly, in Aristotle, the *φιλία* ("friendship") of social state-organized intercourse brings "well-being" to perfection. As with most of the other philosophers, the state and its ordinances, furnishing favourable outward conditions for "justice" (which included the whole of virtue on its earthly side), constituted his highest moral ideal; nevertheless he hints at a means by which the ethical element may eventually overstep the political. "Friendship," says he, "seems to hold states together, and legislators appear to pay more attention to it than to justice. When men are friends, there is no need of justice."³ When we recall how the old Greek proverb, "In justice all virtue is contained," was endorsed by Aristotle, it is suggestive to observe that he so regarded love as the "flower of justice, the inspiring principle, the illuminator of state and business life."⁴ With him also, though in no very practical sense, "love" was "the fulfilling of the law." The Stoics, again, included in their teaching an idea of the "one fold" which would involve the bond of friendship, and which was deduced by them from their belief in one

¹ *Phaedrus*, 252.² *Ibid.* 253.³ *Nicomachean Ethics*, viii. 1.⁴ Neander's *Geschichte der christlichen Ethik*, p. 65, a treatise which the writer has found of service for the present article.

universal law and one general task for all men. Plutarch¹ tells us that their highest aim was "that we should not live in separate cities or as separate peoples, each parted from the other by special rights, but that we should hold all men fellow-countrymen and fellow-citizens; that there should be one life and one world, as if a herd were grazing together, fed by a common pasture." But this premature yearning for cosmopolitanism failed to recognize the differences which necessarily existed in the course of man's development: its ideal that mankind should be an unorganic mass, a uniformity and not a unity, was unhistorical, and unsuitable to the attainment of the general "well-being." And this is true apart from the fact that "wisdom"—the panacea of the Stoics, and the general standpoint of ancient philosophy—was really a separating rather than a uniting principle, and, at any rate, was utterly insufficient to compass the desired end. The attainment, moreover, of the Stoical wisdom entailed likewise such a repression of the emotions that the pattern wise man could know nothing of that "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin." Seneca, on one occasion, exalts clemency at the expense of pity. "Clemency," says he, "is an act of the judgment, but pity disturbs the judgment. Clemency is perfectly passionless; pity is unreasoning emotion. Clemency is an essential characteristic of the sage; pity is only suited for weak women and for diseased minds. The sage will console those who weep, but without weeping with them; he will succour the shipwrecked, give hospitality to the proscribed and alms to the poor; . . . restore the son to the mother's tears, save the

captive from the arena, and even bury the criminal ; but, in all, his countenance will be alike untroubled. He will feel no pity. He will succour, he will do good ; he is born to assist his fellows, to labour for the welfare of mankind. . . . But his countenance will betray no emotion as he looks upon the withered legs, the tattered rags, the bent and emaciated frame of the beggar. . . . It is only diseased eyes that grow moist in beholding tears in others' eyes, as it is no true sympathy, but only weakness of nerves, that leads some to laugh always when others laugh, or to yawn when others yawn." ¹ What a travesty this on the philosophy of the affections ! What wonder, then, that the Stoics, making a vice of pity, which is "akin to love," found their theory of universal philanthropy nothing but "the baseless fabric of a vision" ? He that had no compassion for the troubles of his brethren was not likely to care long to relieve them. But, as Mr. Lecky has truly said in his comment on the above passage, "Friendship rather than love, hospitality rather than charity, magnanimity rather than tenderness, clemency rather than sympathy, are the characteristics of the ancient goodness."

Finally, even the Epicureans devoted themselves to the cultivation of friendship : they looked upon it as the best means of securing life's enjoyments. "It is pleasanter," says Epicurus, in Plutarch,² "to do good than to receive it." But while the theory and actual life of the Epicureans did much by friendship towards softening the asperity and exclusiveness of ancient

¹ Seneca, *On Clemency*, iii. 6, 7, quoted in Lecky's *History of European Morals*, vol. i. pp. 199, 200.

² Plutarch, *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum*, xv. 4.

manners, and, by cultivating the social virtues, helped to increase the general happiness, their principle is too nakedly utilitarian to rank with Christian faith and love.

“Faith, hope, and love—these three,” are, after all, really outside the heathen ethical systems: they are dreams, poetry, and little, if anything, more. All moral excellence was comprehended in *δικαιοσύνη* (“justice”), variously defined, but primarily a social virtue, connected only secondarily, and by conjecture, with the gods, and not necessarily springing from the heart; and the universally accepted avenue to “justice” and happiness was knowledge.

But the Biblical, and specially the New Testament, system of ethics, exalted the sphere of happiness another degree—beyond the *external*, and beyond the *intellectual*, into the *spiritual* region. In that system faith guides, like wisdom or knowledge: it is the principle which reveals the love of God to us, and leads us to love Him; and love is “the bond of all the virtues.” Faith and love, then, are the fundamental conditions on which Christian philosophy builds its conception of happiness. Our task will now be to observe how the idea of *μακάριος* is widened and deepened, and its possibilities extended, by this radical change in its foundations and its relations.

It should be mentioned in starting that the words *ευδαίμων* and *εὐδαιμονία*—implying, by derivation, as we have said, the possession of a “good genius”—are not once found in the Sacred Books. The word *δαίμων* (“dæmon”), which had signified to the Greek imagination merely a divine being, ranking between a god and a man, had acquired among the Jews a “dyslogistic” sense equivalent to the derivative word “demon,”

which the English language has adopted; and δαιμόνια now represented the "evil spirits" by which so many in Palestine were possessed. There can be no reasonable doubt that it was in order to avoid this dyslogistic association that "happy" and "blessed" are throughout the Bible represented by μακάριος alone. Nor is this view at all controverted by the use, however conciliatory, of δεισιδαίμων¹ ("god-fearing;" in the English Version, wrongly, "superstitious") by St. Paul on Mars' Hill, or of δεισιδαιμονία by the Roman Festus, when alluding before Agrippa to the "Jews' religion."²

What, then, is the conception of μακάριος in the Old Testament and in the New? It has been maintained by some that the Old Testament is the "gospel of prosperity," and that its idea of happiness is little, if at all, higher than the external level. And without controversy the conception of happiness under the Old Dispensation involved more of the external than under the New. We cannot forget the wealth of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the "fatness" of the Promised Land, the splendours of David and Solomon, or the predicted prosperity and power of Israel under the sceptre of the Messiah. But the connotation of μακάριος in the Old Testament, almost without an exception, is a sense of God's favour, in consequence of righteousness, even in the midst of present misery. Only in one or two instances does the association of godliness appear to be absent. For example,³ when "Zilpah, Leah's maid, bare Jacob a second son, and Leah said, Happy (μακαρία) am I, for the daughters will call me blessed (μακαριοῦσιν): and she called his name Asher"—the Hebrew word for μακάριος. The Queen of Sheba applies the

¹ Acts xvii. 22.² Ibid. xxv. 19.³ Gen. xxx. 12.

epithet to Solomon's servants :¹ but there is something reaching beyond the outward prosperity even here, for she congratulates them not only on standing "continually before him," but chiefly on "hearing his wisdom," and that they had him as "king over them, *to do judgment and justice.*" There is one passage in the Apocrypha² where the context seems purely earthly. Antiochus promises a young man, if he will apostatize, "to enrich him, and make him to be counted happy (*μακαριστός*) ;" but the earthliness may fairly be charged to Antiochus. And even when we find in the Apocrypha³ what seems at first a startling parallel to the common Hellenic maxim, "Count no man happy before death," it is obvious from the context that religion and righteousness are dominant in the mind of the writer ; for in Verse 26 he says that even "in the day of death it is easy for the Lord to reward a man according to his ways ;" so that, if his happiness has been apart from God, "the end of the man shall bring the revelation of his works" (Verse 27). The whole chapter is a commentary on the mistake of judging by the outward appearance, and the depth of the religious thought is fathomed in the consolation to the poor contained in Verse 21 : "Marvel not at the works of the sinner : trust in the Lord, and abide in thy labour." So emphatically, even in the older books of the Jewish literature, is faith regarded as the inseparable condition of the blessed life. The bulwark of Israel's religion was faith in a future which they could trust to God's righteousness ; and the blessedness of the future—whether it were more immediate prosperity and deliverance from enemies, or participation in the final Messianic

¹ 2 Chron. ix. 7.² 2 Macc. vii. 24.³ Eccus. xi. 28.

glory—involved the serving of God without let or hindrance, and by consequence involved present righteousness.¹ This is the burden of the “law, and the prophets, and the psalms,” and we instantly recall such “commonplaces” as Psalm xxxiv. 8, 12, 13, 14: “O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. . . . What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil. . . . Depart from evil and do good.” Righteousness like this brought present blessedness in spite of present trouble; for, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are highways [that is, ‘to depart from evil’].² Who, passing through the [barren] valley of weeping, make it a place of springs: the early rain also covereth it with blessings. They go from strength to strength.”³ And amid much that appears to make righteousness the avenue to material blessing, there is not a little to suggest that righteousness is a blessing in itself, because thereby we cease to be separate from God. Thus blessedness is attributed⁴ to him “whose transgression is forgiven,” “in whose spirit there is no guile;” and in Psalm cxix. (which from beginning to end affords a striking illustration of the promise in Jeremiah xxxiii. 40: “I will put my fear *in their hearts*”), the material seems almost to have vanished before the spiritual: “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. . . . Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.”

But, it may be said, all this is merely *δικαιοσύνη* (“righteousness”), obedience to, and pleasure in, God’s

¹ Comp. Luke i. 74, 75.

² Comp. Prov. xvi. 17.

³ Psa. lxxxiv. 5-7.

⁴ Ibid. xxxii. 1, 2.

commandments, with faith, but without much sign of love. Well, it was something that faith, not in a universal law, but in the leading of a personal, holy, and merciful, as well as almighty, God should have shed a flood of light upon the life of one people, at any rate, among the peoples of the earth. "Blessed is the nation whose god is the Lord. . . . Our soul waiteth for the Lord. . . . For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name."¹ Yet the "personal relation" required not only faith, but love; and as the love of God for his chosen people was manifest, being constantly revealed in word and act, so also was the all-absorbing love of Israel for God enjoined as "the first commandment of all."² A strange *commandment*, indeed, it may appear; but commandment is the keynote of the Old Testament; and in this instance God sought, through the lawgiver, to make known to the people, now under training, how love, and love alone, was the secret of obedience, after which secret ("the secret of Jesus") they were always to yearn. It must have been suggestive to them that the "loving" was constantly placed before the "keeping of the commandments:"³ in loving, the order seemed to say, lay the strength of obedience. In the Book of Judges,⁴ those that love the Lord are compared to the sun, "when he goeth forth in his might" of warmth and joy and brightness. The love and trust which pervade Psalm xviii. are well heralded by the first verse: "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength!" And at times the luxury of trusting and loving the Lord during adversity appears,

¹ Psa. xxxiii. 12, 20, 21.

² Comp. Mark xii. 29, 30; a quotation from Deuteronomy vi. 4, 5. This commandment occurs frequently in Deuteronomy.

³ Comp. Deut. vii. 9; xxx. 16, 20; Neh. i. 5.

⁴ Judges v. 31.

especially in the Psalms, to produce a blessedness counterbalancing even the joy of prosperity. "There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."¹

The higher air breathed by the Old Testament saints is, in a word, the atmosphere of a trust in God guaranteeing future prosperity, and going far to take the sting out of present calamity; and a love of God in return for experienced and expected deliverance, and because of his loving-kindness and tender-mercy towards them that feared Him. It is true that the pre-Christian idea of happiness appears to be confined, for the most part, to hope in this life. For instance, in Psalm vi. 4, 5, we find the words: "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh, save me for thy mercies' sake. For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" And again in Psalm xxxix. 13: "O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more:" in Psalm lxxxviii. 10: "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?" and in Psalm cxv. 17: "The dead praise not the Lord: neither any that go down into silence." But from such passages as Psalm xvi. 10, 11: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Sheol): neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one" (thy saint), "to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore:" and Psalm xvii. 15: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness;

¹ Psa. iv. 6, 7.

I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness : " and again, Psalm xlix. throughout, but especially Verse 15 : " God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave : for he shall receive me "—from such passages we can but conclude that the idea of the perfection of blessedness in a future life—a life with God—was already dawning on the Hebrew mind, awakened as it was by observing the prosperity of the wicked, and the continued misfortune of the righteous, and also by the earnest longing for a higher and more unbroken communion with God than was possible under the conditions of mortality. Communion with God " face to face " had been regarded hitherto as the highest earthly privilege bestowed, at the rarest intervals, upon "blessed" ones like the "faithful" Moses.¹ "With him will" (or rather, "do") "I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently (*i.e.*, visibly), and not in dark speeches ; and the similitude of the Lord shall" (or rather, "doth") "he behold." But, in the later times, the devout spirit, rising upon the wings of its conscious oneness with the Divine, soared beyond the "land of forgetfulness" to the bliss of an immortal fellowship with God.

JOHN MASSIE.

¹ Num. xii. 8.

ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS.

THE way in which the names of Annas and Caiaphas occur in the New Testament has given some trouble to Commentators. They are found first in St. Luke's Gospel,¹ mentioned both together at the commencement of the preaching of John the Baptist, and are there called "the high priests." St. Matthew, in the narrative of our Lord's trial,² speaks only of Caiaphas, and calls him "the high priest." But St. John, who also mentions Caiaphas as "the high priest," tells us that Jesus, after his arrest, was first brought to Annas,³ as if he were of chief importance, and then was sent by him to Caiaphas. Lastly, in the Acts,⁴ we have Annas called the high priest, and the name of Caiaphas mentioned at the same time, but no title is given to the latter.

But we know from Josephus⁵ that Annas (Ananus), who was father-in-law to Caiaphas, was made high priest by Quirinus (Cyrenius), A. D. 7, and continued in that office for seven years, when he was deprived of it by Valerius Gratus, and was never chosen to be high priest afterwards.

Now this was a long time before the mission of the Baptist commenced. After Annas, Ismael, the son of Phabi, was made high priest for a short time, and then Eleazar, one of the sons of Annas, who had been high priest before, was appointed for a brief period, and there succeeded him Simon the son of Camithus.⁶ Next in order came Caiaphas, who was also called Joseph, and he was the high priest from A. D. 25-37,

¹ Luke iii. 9.² Matt. xxvi. 3, 57.³ John xviii. 13, 24.⁴ Acts iv. 6.⁵ *Antiq.* xviii. 2, 1.⁶ *Ibid.* xviii. 2, 2.

and then was deposed by Vitellius.¹ So that Caiaphas was acting as high priest through all the ministerial life of John the Baptist and of Jesus, and for the first years of the early ministry of the apostles. Yet during this period we find in our historic books of the New Testament that Annas is called high priest when he was not actually so, that he is treated as of prime authority by the Jewish people, and is called high priest by the writer of the Acts, as though he took a rank above Caiaphas.

But if we examine the statements of Holy Writ, and the records to be found in later Jewish literature concerning the high priest's office, there seems to be no great difficulty in understanding that the words of the New Testament concerning these men are exactly such as would naturally be employed.

1. We see, from the first institution of the high priest's office, that Moses, who is himself counted (Psa. xcix. 6) a high priest on the same level as Aaron, anointed (Exod. xl. 12-15), not only Aaron, but his sons also, to be high priests. Also Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, is sent to the war against the Midianites with "the holy instruments"² (*i.e.*, the Urim and Thummim), a proceeding which shews that he at that time was high priest, as well as Eleazar, his father. Again, in later times, we have mention of "Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest,"³ on which words the Targum explains that these were "the high priest and the Sagan, or deputy high priest."

And the Talmud makes it very clear that at certain times there was a special arrangement for providing a deputy to execute the high priest's office. Thus it is

¹ *Antiq.* xviii. 4, 3.

² Num. xxxi. 6.

³ 2 Kings xxv. 18.

said :¹ "Seven days before the day of atonement they remove the high priest from his house to the chamber of the assessors, and they provide another priest in his place, lest any disqualification should befall him." On this passage Rashi's note is (fol. 2 a), "To be high priest *instead of him*."

A little later on in the same treatise,² speaking of the services of the day of atonement, the text runs thus : "Rabbi Khanina, the Sagan of the priests (and so one who himself had held the office), said : Why is there a Sagan on the right hand of the high priest (when the lots are cast for the goats)? The answer is : So that, if any disqualification should befall him, the Sagan may go (into the holy of holies) and perform the service in his stead."

There is also some illustration of this subject in the *Midrash Rabbah*³ on Leviticus. In one place we read : "If there was any defilement on Aaron, Eleazar served (as high priest); if there was any defilement on Eleazar, Ithamar served. Just as in the case of Shimeon, the son of Kimkhith, who went out to speak with the king of the Arabians. There came a fleck of spittle from his (the king's) mouth upon his (the high priest's) garments, and he was unclean. And Judah his brother went in and served instead of him in the high priest's office. On that day their mother saw *two of her sons high priests*."

And again, in the same Chapter : "Had not Eli-sheba⁴ (the wife of Aaron) joy in this world, who saw five crowns (*i. e.*, subjects for rejoicing) in one day : her brother-in-law (Moses), a king ;⁵ her brother

¹ T. B. *Yoma*, i. 1.

³ Par. 20.

² *Yoma*, 39 a, and the parallel passages.

⁴ Exod. vi. 23.

⁵ Deut. xxxiii. 5.

(Naashon), *nasi*¹ (i.e., president of the Sanhedrin); her husband, high priest; her two sons, Sagans of the high priest; and Phinehas, her grandson, anointed for the war."

These extracts make it clear that from the earliest times down to a date after the composition of the Acts of the Apostles there were often circumstances under which two men were called high priests at the same time.

2. That one who had once been high priest, but had ceased to be in office, would still be called high priest, is evident from that principle which is laid down in several places in the Talmud,² that "you may elevate in the matter of a sacred thing or office, but you cannot bring down." As with us, "Once a bishop, always a bishop." The illustration there given is that you might lay the shewbread on a marble table first, and after that on a golden one, but the contrary order of proceeding was forbidden. A similar illustration is found³ concerning the disposal of public property, where we are told that the authorities may sell ordinary land, to buy with the sum realized a synagogue; or may sell a synagogue to buy an ark for keeping the Law in; or may sell the ark to buy wrappers for the roll of the Law; or sell such wrappers to buy books, and so help on the spread of knowledge; or may sell ordinary books to procure a copy of the Law; because in each of these cases the thing purchased is of a more exalted character than that which was sold for its purchase. But the reverse of this process was unlawful.

We see, therefore, that when Annas had been high priest, it was not only likely that he would continue to

¹ Num. vii. 12.

² See T.B. *She'alam*, vi. 4.

³ T.B. *Megillah*, 26 a.

be called high priest, but that, according to Jewish usage, he could be called nothing else.

3. The age of Annas, and the influential position naturally occupied by one who had been acting high priest himself, whose son had twice held the same office, and who was father-in-law to the present high priest, are sufficient to warrant the action of the crowd in taking Christ to Annas first ; while in the passage of the Acts,¹ the mention of Annas at the head of the list, with the title of high priest (which, we see, would be sure to be given him), was nothing more than was due to his years and to the relationship in which he stood to Caiaphas, while the omission of the high-priest's title after the name of Caiaphas is no more a proof that he was not also high priest, than the language of St. Mark's Gospel,² when it is said, "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter," is evidence that Peter was not one of the disciples. Instances of a like kind of omission might easily be multiplied, as when we read,³ "Then Peter and the apostles answered and said." Peter is here placed apart from the rest, yet nobody would ever argue from such a passage that St. Luke meant to exclude him from the number of the Twelve.

J. RAWSON LUMBY.

¹ Acts iv. 6.

² Mark xvi. 7.

³ Acts v. 29.

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